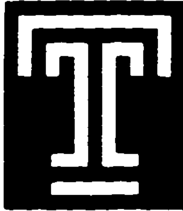
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SACRIFICE OR MEDITATION?

TWO MODELS OF RITUAL AS AN ACT THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

A Dissertation

Submitted to

the Temple University Graduate Board

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

William Cully Allen

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ABSTRACT

Title:	Sacrifice or Meditation? Two Models of Ritual as an Act Theory of Knowledge
Candidates Name:	William Cully Allen
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This work presents new translations of two Sanskrit texts in debate with each other. The texts are Kumarila Bhatta's "Niralambanavada" chapter in his seventh-century Slokavartikam and Vasubandhu's third century Vimsatika. The first chapter outlines the issues at stake including the centrality of action, common sense, epistemology, scriptural authority and schemes of salvation. Chapter two introduces the Mimamsa tradition of Kumarila Bhatta and presents a textual and philosophical analysis of the "Niralambanavada". Chapter three examines Vasubandhu's Yogacara tradition and analyzes the Vimsatika in terms of its thematization of consciousness and critique of epistemology and ontology. The fourth chapter looks between the texts and finds no common ground on which to reconcile the totally different perspectives of the householder and the monk, sacrifice and meditation. The fifth chapter discusses difficulties in translation peculiar to the Sanskrit shastra genre with particular reference to "Niralambanavada" and the Vimsatika. Chapter six is my translation of "Niralambanavada" and explanatory end-notes. The seventh chapter is my translation of the Vimsatika.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Two Visions of Life: The Householder and the Monk

This work introduces and presents new translations of two influential texts in Sanskrit thought. It is a discourse arising between two texts, namely Kumarila Bhatta's "*Niralambanavada*" chapter in his 7th century *Slokavartikam* and Vasubandhu's 4th century *Vimsatika*. The two traditions in discussion here represent two different visions of life. At opposition are Vedic Hindu sacrificial ritualism and Mahayana Buddhist meditative reflection: the householder and the monk. The themes of the texts are every bit as post-modern as they are ancient. The discourse concerns such issues as the relationship between author and text, text and reader, identity and difference, act and intention, word and action, self and other, and consciousness and objects. No one brings these differences into sharper relief than Kumarila and Vasubandhu. Although these giants of Indian thought were not contemporaries, the discussion represented both within and between their respective texts brings their disparate perspectives on objects into the sharpest possible focus.

What do competing systems of thought entail and what are they trying to say to us? To have total coherent vision of life involves taking a position (*paksa*) and listening to what others have to say (*purvapaksa*), what categories they use to present their views, what criticisms the opponent has, and answering their criticisms. *Paksa* entails a position which gives a consistent, comprehensive and coherent construction of meaning. It is a complete system explaining how to know (epistemology) and what there is to know (ontology), addressing such categories as substance, relations, time, space, body, mind, self, intention, memory, loss of memory, recollection, and recognition. All such terms

are facts for Kumarila, not fictional discourse. These competing systems of meaning constitute the worlds of discourse which are brought face to face in debate. Each position is driven by the need to say something about its world. One thinks from a point of view in defense of accusations that one's position is full of contradictions and incoherence.

There are two communities at debate with each other in this dissertation. One is Hindu; the other is Buddhist. The Hindu tradition is the Bhatta school of Purva Mimamsa and the Buddhist tradition is the Mahayana school of Yogacara. We focus on two texts in direct confrontation with each other. Sanskrit discourse is an encounter between traditions and texts. The authors are not important. The authors are only embodiments of the traditions to which they belong and which they represent. The interpretation of a text is done in defense of what has already been established. It is a reiteration of the tradition's stance in light of new challenges. A text presupposes an earlier text and all thinking is rethinking. The discourse is between competing communities of group think, never face to face because the author is an embodiment of the point of view of the group *(paksa)*. This dialogue is not between persons, but between an author as embodiment of a tradition of thought facing another position embodied in a book whose author is gone. This is why the discourse is impersonal. Kumarila never mentions Vasubandhu by name. Adherents to various systems think of themselves as members of a school of thought. There is no private thinking. One's identity is not as an individual, but as a Bhatta, a Mimamsaka, a Baudha, a Nyayaka, etc.

We restrict ourselves to the relation of consciousness and objects and the notion of religious life each entail: sacrificial *(yajna)* or meditational. The topic of discourse is the ontological autonomy of objects. The Mimamsaka upholds the autonomy; the Yogacarin rejects it. The historical occasion for the debate was the arrival of Vasubandhu's text, the *Vimsatika,* which was the most coherent and total refutation of the ontological autonomy of objects. Vasubandhu's position shook Hindu intellectual circles so much so that Sabara took it upon himself to refute it. However, a more thorough

critique of the Yogacarin position was not undertaken until several centuries later by Kumarila Bhatta. Kumarila's "*Niralambanvada*" chapter in his seventh century *Slokavartikam* is a 202 verse commentary on Sabara's *Bhasya*, all aimed at the refutation of a single verse in Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika*. The debate is between the *Vimsatika* and the "*Niralambanavada*".

The discourse is intra-textual and inter-textual, ensuing both within and between the texts. An argument is an indirect tacit representation and defense of a tradition's position. Responsible disagreement entails a counter position that is well-known because it has been thoroughly studied by the opponent. Each author formulates the opponent's views honestly and accurately, more often than not, in order to refute them. A reading of either of the texts alone will acquaint the reader with both sides of the argument. However, each author controls the terms and direction of the discourse within his own text. The mark of a great text in Sanskrit philosophical discourse is its ability to lead the reader to draw the text's own conclusion. When the discourse is controlled by only one of the texts, the reader is more easily compelled to favor one position over the other. This dissertation seeks to present both sides of the discussion by looking at the argument entailed both within and between the two texts. We will consider the topic by first following the terms of discourse set by Kumarila Bhatta's "*Niralambanavada*". Next we will listen to the same topic debated in the radically different terms of Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika*. After having examined both texts on their own terms, we will attempt to discern the conversation which occurs between the texts. In an age when the prevailing sentiment in academic circles of discourse on religious systems is to harmonize and minimize differences, I want to focus on what has been ignored. The importance of difference in Sanskrit thought cannot be overemphasized. Difference is reiterated and reaffirmed through interpretation. The tradition is constituted by disagreement. An author writes in the presence of an opposite point of view. Opposition entails disagreement and persistence of identity in the face of difference. Structurally speaking,

Sanskrit philosophical discourse invites provocation. Such is the economy of Sanskrit discourse.

This dissertation represents its author's attempt to read and re-present two radically different visions of the world, each claiming to be rooted in common sense. The question emerges, is there any common ground on which to locate common sense? We share a common language, which for better or for worse is full of uncommon words and uncommon meanings. By uncommon, I mean technical, specialized vocabulary that privatizes language to a narrow circle of professional discourse. The circle of this discourse is not restricted, no reader should feel excluded by the inaccessibility of technical jargon. Though the Sanskrit discourse does entail technical terms whose meanings are not always shared by the discussants exchanging those words, it is nevertheless a principle of Sanskrit discourse to use words whose meanings are known by common parlance.[1] Disputants who use words with privatized, professional meanings inaccessible to the masses stand to be censored by the judge, the moderator and mediator of the debate. If a debater misuses words too often, he may even forfeit his right to participate in the discourse. Each reader must serve the censorial function of a judge in regard to the words confronting him in a text. Whenever I introduce a Sanskrit term, I have always either immediately preceded or succeeded the term with some familiar English words, though not always in familiar phrases. As a reader *cum* writer I agree with Kumarila Bhatta who believed that the sentence, not individual words, convey the meaning.[2] Whenever Vasubandhu and Kumarila use the same words with different meanings, I try to preserve the integrity of each author's understanding of himself on and in his own terms. I try to lead the reader in negotiating a reasonable exchange rate on the currency of words, when the monk and the householder use the same ones differently. Their differences over word meanings, and their differences regarding the nature of

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[1] Sabara, *Bhasya* 1.1.1.

[2] Harold Coward, *Sphota Theory of Language*. See on Mimamsa. pp. 35-42; p.122.

language itself make it a marvel that they can understand each other at all and much more a marvel if we can understand what they are saying about themselves, let alone what they are saying about each other. I contend that Kumarila understood Vasubandhu at least as well as Vasubandhu understood himself, and that Vasubandhu understood Kumarila at least as well. I say at least because I am inclined to think that Kumarila sees something about Vasubandhu that the monk cannot see about himself and Vasubandhu sees something about Kumarila that the householder cannot see about himself. But can the one show what he sees about the other to the other for the other to see? Or do their disparate commitments to different ways of being in the world, one as householder the other as monk, predispose them to blindness -- the utter incapacity to see any common path to walk on or any common goal to speak of?

1.2 Issues at Stake

The religious dimensions of this agenda provide the occasion and importance of this dissertation. We restrict our consideration to the ontological autonomy of objects and its refutation. The controversy is total, hinging on five issues: the primacy of action, common sense, epistemology, scriptural authority, and schemes of salvation.[3]

It is a profound irony that both traditions, Vasubandhu and Kumarila, are radically rooted in the primacy of action. Both systems propose act theories of knowledge. No one in Indian thought gave more importance to action than these two competing traditions. Kumarila situates the genesis of action in the performing agent. Subject and object are both ontologically given. Consciousness is not a thing-in-itself; it is only a function of the self. Vasubandhu, on the other hand, reaffirms action as autonomous to the self. Neither subject nor object are ontologically given, but they are acts of consciousness. Vasubandhu is honest to his own tradition, going back to the words of the Buddha who

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[3] Bibhuti S. Yadav and William C. Allen, Our approach has been outlined in "Between Kumarila and Vasubandhu" Journal of Dharma, 1995.

taught that existence is action and action entails change. Therefore what does not change, does not exist. His innovativeness[4] is that he accounts for the change of the so-called objects in the changing consciousness itself. Vasubandhu appropriates dependent origination of objects to consciousness. Consciousness depends on itself and lives through its own actions *(vipaka)*. While both Kumarila and Vasubandhu give primacy to action, they take totally opposite positions regarding the relationship between action and agent. For both thinkers action is more important than the subject. From this common point of departure Vasubandhu and Kumarila have little else in common. That little else is their mutual marginalization of God, Brahman, *Isvara*, *devas*, and *devis*. We should not overlook the conspicuous absence of God. It is not that they replace God with something equivalent or parallel. God, Brahman, *Isvara*, etc. simply are not important. Meditative action is central to Vasubandhu's explanatory account of the world, whereas sacrificial ritual action is at the heart of Kumarila's comprehensive world-view. The discourse concerns the conditions under which human actions are possible. There are two radically different ways to approach this topic: Kumarila takes an objectivistic stance; objects constitute the conditions under which human actions are possible. Vasubandhu represents the subjectivist posture; obsession with objects constitutes the condition of human action.

One of the cardinal principles of Sanskrit discourse to which all Indian systems must give strict account is common sense. The everyday lived experience of ordinary people is the final court to which all philosophers must appeal. Philosophical discourse, no matter how profound, must meet the demands of common sense. The traditions denounce each other, in the most undiplomatic terms, for lacking common sense. Kumarila accuses Yogacarins of being mad and blind as owls. Vasubandhu and his tradition return the favor, depicting *Bhayarthavadins* (believers in external objects) as

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[4] William S. Waldron, "How Innovative is the *Alayavijnana*?", Journal of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 22, No. 3, September 1994.

unreflective people who cannot think. A position (*siddhanta*) must show respect for common sense. Central to common sense is respect for human nature, namely human interests in need.

Common sense entails epistemology. Perhaps the most central issue at stake in this debate is epistemological. Kumarila's edifice is constructed on the well-established ground of syllogistic reasoning, the very method of reasoning to which all parties in a debate must subscribe. Epistemological inquiry constitutes the common terms of discourse. Although actions are primary for Kumarila, the very idea of action not only entails the ends or needs which must be met, but also the knowledge of things and devising the means to achieve the end. Thus the need for epistemology, especially perception and inference, to establish truth claims. Doing good things entails knowing what things are there in order to materialize ends.

For Vasubandhu, all knowledge is suspect. He questions the very foundations on which syllogistic reasoning ensues. Vasubandhu takes an unprecedented tack in Sanskrit debate. Employing the form of epistemological discourse, Vasubandhu calls into question the foundational assumptions on which epistemology is based. He also calls into question theories of perception, sense and sense data, especially inference. Vasubandhu says that epistemology, like anything else, is an act of consciousness, and consciousness is deceptive. He asks us to consider under what internal compulsions does consciousness come to assume an epistemic posture? To this crucial and dividing concern we will return, allowing the disparate voices of Kumarila and Vasubandhu to be heard on their own terms and from within their own texts.

Sanskrit discourse is textual. At stake in this controversy is the issue of scriptural authority. Kumarila composed the *Slokavartikam* in defense of the authorless Veda. The entire compendium is motivated by the necessity to uphold its infallible authority. Appeal to scriptural authority is an important convention in Sanskrit discourse. In spite

of the fact that Buddhists reject the authority of the Vedic text, they are no less interested in substantiating their stance by invoking their own scriptural traditions. Appeal to scriptural precedent is a hallmark of Sanskrit discussion. Vasubandhu inaugurates his *Vimsatika* by an immediate and direct appeal to the tradition of the Mahayana sutras. Kumarila initiates his "*Niralambanavada*" chapter of the *Slokavartikam* by stating that Yogacara's denial of the autonomy of objects undermines not only the validity of the Vedas, but also the very possibility of epistemological method. Vasubandhu's critique of ontology and epistemology presents the most radical and threatening challenge to Vedic orthodoxy. Vasubandhu does not do epistemology. He critiques it, calling into question the prerequisite distinction between agent, object, and action. Inferential reasoning presupposes an ontological and real difference between agent, object, and action. Vasubandhu's text critiques both ontology and epistemology without dependence on the one and only epistemological method traditionally required for meaningful discourse. This move by Vasubandhu represents a shift in theme and method. Vasubandhu, we contend, is the first Buddhist to depart from the age old unquestioned assumptions on which Indian epistemology is based. He believed that he could dispense with traditional epistemology without sacrificing common sense.

Kumarila, unlike most readers of the *Vimsatika*, demonstrates his keen awareness of Vasubandhu's epistemological critique. He questions Vasubandhu's right to exempt himself from the sacrosanct method of Indian epistemology. For Kumarila and the Indian tradition generally, to eschew the epistemological method is to disqualify oneself from the right to debate. It is no small irony that Kumarila devotes nearly a quarter of his "*Niralambanvada*" to challenge the Buddhist's right to carry on a debate without accepting the epistemological terms and categories that constitute the rules of meaningful philosophical discourse.

Most Indian philosophy, whether Hindu or Buddhist, is driven by sotereological questions. However, Mimamsa and Yogacara espouse radically different visions of both

salvation and the means for achieving it. Kumarila's approach is external and formal, focusing on the employment of real objects, especially ritual objects, as the means to fulfill predetermined ends. Vasubandhu's approach is internal, focusing on images in the mind, locating both suffering and salvation in human consciousness independent of external objects.

Foremost among the reasons I am writing is the agenda which Vasubandhu sets for the history of Indian thought. Vasubandhu inaugurates the first systematic treatment of consciousness in such a way as to shape the course of subsequent systematic attention to the theme. Reflection on consciousness is already present in Upanisadic thought, but not until the advent of Vasubandhu does the nature of consciousness become the key for presenting a comprehensive vision of the world. Vasubandhu's agenda shapes the development of Indian thought by introducing the debate on objects independent of consciousness. Dignaga and Dharmakirti, later joined by Kamasila, Shantaraksita, and Ratnakirti, were the early architects of Buddhist logic and epistemology; they unanimously disagreed with the traditional Hindu view on ontology of objects. Prior to Vasubandhu the entire discourse was determined by epistemological considerations. The Nyaya tradition of the *pramana shastras* controlled the discussion, establishing epistemology as a serious methodology for discerning the nature of objects. Vasubandhu, as we will see, did not do epistemology. Nevertheless, it was Vasubandhu's treatment of consciousness that provided the impetus for Nyaya tradition to do epistemological reflection on the nature of consciousness. Do the forms and properties associated with objects reside in the objects themselves or are they manufactured by consciousness? Is consciousness empty of forms, or are the forms inherent in it? Questions like this, which Vasubandhu posed, had serious implications for ontological debate between Nyaya and Mimamsa on such categories as universals and particulars, identity and difference, self and consciousness, and memory and perception. What is the genesis of those categories? Do they pertain to real entities as Hindu orthodoxy has argued, or are these categories a

product of constructive imagination? Vasubandhu's contribution introduced into the debate the importance of imagination in constructing a world. Vasubandhu's position is the undoing of ontological and epistemological preoccupation with consciousness. By positing consciousness as the genesis of the world, his thought points the controversy of consciousness in a new direction, one which forever alters the landscape of systematic Indian reflection on the topic. Taking their cue from this new direction heralded by Vasubandhu, Avinavagupta and others in Kasmir Saivism, too, come to identify consciousness as the genesis of the world. Even Vedanta was not immune. Gaudapada, the founder of Advaita Vedanta, used images and metaphors introduced by Vasubandhu.[5] These images of dream, illusion, hallucination, etc., became root metaphors along with *vasana,* the deep dispositional desire for objects that determines all cognitions. By raising the question of whether a *vasana* is in individual consciousness or is a property of something transcendental to consciousness, Vasubandhu affected Vedanta directly. Even Shankaracharya's system of thought bears the inescapable influence of themes which Vasubandhu set. He equated *maya* with *vasana.* This deep dispositional desire for objects is innate to consciousness. *Vasana* indicates being and existence. Driven by the desire for objects, consciousness comes to be the world. Vasubandhu also inadvertently paved the way for Vallabhacharya to locate the *vasana* in God, making the *vasana* of individual consciousness lead the person to God.

Vasubandhu's texts have received considerable attention since their first translation into French three decades ago[6], but much of the discourse on Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika* has been preoccupied with discussing whether and to what extent Vasubandhu denied the externality of the world. Opposing interpretive camps have characterized him by such apparently irreconcilable designations as "psychological idealist" and "existential

[5] See Gaudapada's commentary on *Mandukya Upanisad* called *Agama Sastra.*

[6] Louis de La Vallee Poussin, "Analyse du *Prajnapti-sastra*"

realist".[7] Questions which have controlled the discourse thus far have been mulled over and debated enough: whether there is one "mind-only", a plurality of "minds-only", a plurality within the unity of "mind only"; whether there is one, two, three Vasubandhu's or no Vasubandhu at all. The past three decades of scholarly writing on Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika* has generated much heat and light, if not just as much smoke. My enthusiasm about this scholarship has been largely engendered by the heated and passionate tone established by the many previous voices on whose well built fire, I offer my work as a bundle of sticks.

Much is known about Vasubandhu and Yogacara, but I want to introduce them in relation to a less known, but no less important writer and tradition in the history of Indian philosophy. Though less known than Vasubandhu and Yogacara, Kumarila and Mimamsa have by no means been ignored. However, most modern treatments of Mimamsa restrict themselves to issues of grammatical and etymological formulation of words, narrowing and limiting the discourse, and obscuring the more fundamental nature of Mimamsa. Studies emphasizing Mimamsa as an exegetical system chiefly concerned with the Vedic words and their correct interpretation are valuable, but neglect Mimamsa's most central concern, and inadvertently create a false impression of what Mimamsa is all about. As Francis Clooney's painstaking research on the much neglected, vast majority of the *Mimamsasutra* has demonstrated, the *Mimamsasutra* is concerned with "reading" and interpreting the Vedic ritual action and with organizing and harmonizing the set of texts with the set of traditional rituals.[8] Most modern scholars of Mimamsa overlook or neglect Mimamsa's central concern, namely Vedic sacrificial ritual. Indologists and Orientalists have too often assumed that rituals are dead. They separate out interesting philosophical concerns, like the relationship between word and

[7] Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu* ; and Thomas Kochumttom, *A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience*.

[8] Francis Clooney, *Thinking Ritually*, p.24.

action, from their ritual context, disregarding Mimamsa's fundamental motive and aim. Mimamsakas investigate the relationship between Vedic word and sacrificial action, not because the topic is inherently fascinating, but because they seek to understand the fundamental nature and structure of the world as co-ordinate with the sacrifice.[9] Unfortunately, Vedic ritualism has bad press. Most descriptive accounts of Mimamsa's ritualism are derived from sources that portray ritualism in not so eulogistic terms. Vedanta announces itself as the Later (Uttara) Mimamsa as if superseding the more primitive, preliminary, and preparatory, earlier (Purva) Mimamsa of the Vedic rites. Vedic rituals are not dead for those who perform them and believe in them. If there ever was a period in India's history when Vedic sacrificial rituals were all but smoldering in ashes, the response of Mimamsa was not to discard Vedic ritual actions and take up Vedantic meditation, but to defend ritual action by showing that ritual action and the Vedic word form a single, original whole. Mimamsa is a valuable source for those doing reflection on other relationships between word and ordinary action. Mimamsa's emphasis on the power of language in shaping reality provides a wealth of material on which to discover an ancient theory of language, ontology of self-expression, and the possibility of experiencing transcendence and revelation through words.[10] Recently, Kumarila's "*Niralambanavada*" has received the thoughtful, scholarly attention of John Tabor.[11] His observations and insights concerning Kumarila's critique of Vasubandhu's "dreaming argument" have goaded me, serving sometimes as a foil, but never, I hope, as a straw man.

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[9] Thomas Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, for a detailed and systematic treatment of correspondences between the components of sacrifice, nature, society, etc. pp. 21-24.

[10] Francis X. D'Sa, *Sabdapramanyam in Sabara and Kumarila*; see also Othmar Gachter, *Hermeneutics and Language in Purva Mimamsa*.

[11] John Tabor, "Kumarila's Critique of the Dreaming Argument in *Niralambanvada*" *Studies in Purva Mimamsa*, Dwivedi.

No issue was more fundamental and more persistent in the history of Indian thought than the relation of consciousness to objects. This issue is not merely a matter of intellectual curiosity. It is the key to organized, religious, moral, social, and political life even today. On this issue there have been fundamentally two positions. First there are those who believe that an object is something which is desired. A subject has desire for an object and appropriates the means necessary to obtain the object. Objects are intended and eventually brought into being through efforts. This view entails the primacy of consciousness and how consciousness transforms itself into a subject which desires an object. Consciousness is irrational, appropriative, and possessive. It is deceptive. Human consciousness is a subject that believes and feels that salvation consists in something it does not, namely an object. The second position regarding the relationship between consciousness and object declares that things are important. Meaning is constituted by objects which are there. We have only to devise epistemology as the means for determining the object and perform instrumental ritual actions to appropriate them. This independence of objects determines and delimits human life. Things cannot be reduced to consciousness. Simply because one thinks it is there does not make it there. This issue is at the very heart of both philosophical and intellectual discourse on the meaning of life.

Much has been written about Buddhism and Vedanta;[12] Vasubandhu has been compared and contrasted with William James, David Hume, Edmond Husserl, and a host of other Western philosophers and psychologists of religion, but I want to introduce a less known controversy between Kumarila and Vasubandhu and expose it to the scholarly community. Studies of the *Vimsatika* and "*Niralambanvada*" have de-contextualized these traditions, often uprooting them from their historical, socio-political-economic grounding in Gupta India. This study situates the discourse on objects where it belongs,

[12] Gregory Darling, *An Evaluation of the Vedantic Critique of Buddhism;* also Steven Kaplan, "Noting Similarities between Gaudapada and Yogacara of Vasubandhu", Journal of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 20, No. 2, June, 1992.

in the controversial relationship between knowledge and society, between the householder and the monk. The uniqueness of this work is that it takes seriously what most studies of Vasubandhu and Kumarila ignore, namely the seriousness of Kumarila's and Vasubandhu's position and purpose, which is to think in context, textually, through the other, the different, the opponent. This work returns the discourse to the texts, within and between the texts. The texts do reflection on themselves and on each other. There is practically no scholarly work discussing these issues between Kumarila and Vasubandhu in this manner. This work focuses the issues in context, in their own internal pan-Indian context, not in comparison with everybody or anybody in the West. The uniqueness of this work is that it takes difference seriously and attempts to clarify the respective traditions in light of their historical and textual antithesis to each other. In keeping with the *shastra* tradition, dialogue is done, not to discover new truths, but to reiterate already known and well-established truth to which the authors belong and which they represent. The occasion for reiterating is the arrival of a new text, a new thinker whose challenges must be refuted. Problems and solutions are neither individual nor private. There are no new truths or questions; there are only new arguments which must be counter-argued. There are recurring questions which can never be answered definitely. Great answers are so because they cannot be refuted.

CHAPTER TWO

KUMARILA AND HIS TEXTUAL TRADITION

2.1 The Life and Times of Kumarila Bhatta

Although there is no precise consensus among scholars assigning dates for Kumarila's life, various scholars have unanimously situated him in the 7th century of the common era.[13] In all likelihood he succeeded Vasubandhu (4th century) and Dignaga by a couple of centuries and was a contemporary of Vasubandhu's most famous and esteemed disciple, Dharmakirti. Whether he was from the North or South is unsettled. Tarantha claims that he was a native of South India, but Anandagiri records that Kumarila came from the North (Udagdesat) and persecuted the Buddhists and Jains in the South.[14] In any case, Kumarila was born in the wake of great political tumult and intellectual fervor. The advent of the 7th century was characterized by continued Hun invasions. The Gupta empire had already collapsed under the strain of the invaders, but the line survived in the form of smaller divided kingships throughout the century of confusion which followed. The Gupta period which set the stage for Kumarila's arrival has been heralded as the most brilliant epoch in the development of Indian Philosophy. Hinduism and Buddhism flourished side by side generating an intellectual fervor paralleling the political commotion of the unsettled 7th century.

There are two especially important primary sources which help to situate Kumarila in the social, economic and political context of his turbulent seventh-century India: the *Si-yu-ki* written by a Buddhist monk, Hsuan Tsang, and the *Harsha-charita* composed by Harsha's court poet, Bana the Brahmin. At the beginning of Kumarila's

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[13] G.N. Jha, *Purva Mimamsa in its Sources* ; also John Tabor, "Kumarila's Critique of the Dreaming Argument" in *Studies in Mimamsa*.

[14] *Sankara Vijaya* (Calcutta edition, p. 235).

century, Harsha Vardhana ruled, successfully warding off Hun attacks, and reviving a unified dominion over North India. Between his ascendancy to the throne in 606 and his death in 648, Harsha extended his empire to a size approaching the pre Hun Gupta kingdom of Vasubandhu's day. According to his chroniclers, he divided the royal revenues in four equal sums distributed to the military, public servants, Brahmin priests and Buddhist monks, and the final quarter was used to reward the winners of royally patronized philosophical debates. Like the Guptas of Vasubandhu's day, Harsha was a generous patron of intellectual achievement, literature and the arts, held poetical contests at his court and even wrote plays himself. One of the plays has survived and begins with an invocation to the Buddha instead of Siva or Vishnu. The *Nagananda* of Harsha is a Buddhist drama, presenting the story of a Bodhisattva who saved the race of *Nagas* (serpents), from destruction by offering himself in their place to Vishnu's bird, Garuda, mortal enemy of all *Nagas*. They are celebrated as heroes in Mahayana mythology because they protected and preserved the *Prajnaparamita-sutras* from destruction. If Kumarila ever had the occasion to see this play performed at Harsha's court, it must certainly have been distressing since it was the enactment of a myth that was all too true of Harsha, who liberally funded the copying of Buddhist sutras. Every five years Harsha held a huge assembly and gave away all that was in the royal treasury to Buddhists, Brahmins and ascetics. On these occasions he even gave away the crown jewels to fund Buddhist monks copying Buddhist texts. He is said to have divided each day by devoting one third to concerns of the state, and two thirds to administration of charities, feeding a thousand Buddhist monks and 500 Brahmins every day from the royal kitchen. To his reign and patronage are attributed the work of Susruta in medicine, of the Vaisesika school in physics, Brahmagupta's anticipation of gravitational theory, and in mathematics the calculation, more accurate than the Greeks, of a value for pi.

The *Si-yu-ki* is a first hand literary account of its author, Hsuan-tsang, a Chinese Buddhist monk who, in the seventh-century, spent fifteen years traveling in India.

Hsuan-tsang's detailed description of this period illustrates that religious and philosophical differences between Hinduism and Buddhism were conflicts of far reaching social, economic and political implications. In spite of the fact that this period is often romanticized as a golden age of intellectual fervor when Buddhism and Hinduism thrived side by side in a noble spirit of ecumenical toleration, Hsuan-tsang's journal conclusively demonstrates that such was never the case. This is not to say that Buddhism and Hinduism do not share the same heritage. Buddhism is the inescapable heir of Hinduism. The genesis of Buddhism is its rejection of the Vedic understanding of *dharma*. Buddhism rejects the Vedic *dharma* and reclaims the word, championing a totally different view of what *dharma* entails. The struggle over defining words was no mere scholastic hair splitting; its social, economic and political implications are made explicit by Hsuan-tsang's travel log. Having departed China for India in 629 in search of Buddhist texts, he was received under the royal patronage of the king of Kasmir. It is particularly interesting that he spent two years in Kasmir studying Vasubandhu's texts with an eminent Yogacara teacher. From there he journeyed to Nalanda, then the largest Buddhist university in India, housing over five thousand monks. By Kumarila's day it was the bastion of Mahayana Buddhism and attracted students from China, Tibet and Nepal who carried the Mahayana influence throughout Asia. King Harsha built a new library for Nalanda's thousands of sacred manuscripts and committed the revenues from one hundred large villages to fund the education of needy students at Nalanda. Throughout the five years Hsuan-tsang stayed at Nalanda, he repeatedly declined royal summons to visit Harsha, preferring not to interrupt his study. He persisted also in demurring the summons of Kumara, one of Harsha's eighteen vassal kings until Kumara sent an envoy to Nalanda, announcing that he would send an army and elephants to trample Nalanda into the dust if the Chinese Master of the *Dharma* would not give him audience. The abbot at Nalanda sent Hsuan-tsang immediately to Kumara. When Harsha learned that his vassal had the monk in his company, he ordered Kumara to send

him the monk. Kumara responded by sending Harsha the message that he could take his head, but not his guest! Harsha retorted with a message to send the head at once! Kumara yielded to his sovereign and accompanied the monk to visit Harsha. Upon hearing the Yogacarin discourse, Harsha was soundly converted to Mahayana and announced the arrangement of a grand philosophical debate, inviting leading Brahmin and Buddhist scholars to the assembly at Kanuj. The two opposing factions headed by Harsha and Kumara processed along opposite sides of the river on a three month trek ending at Kanuj where several thousand Buddhist monks and three thousand Brahmins and Jains along with Harsha's eighteen vassal kings and their entourages had already congregated in anticipation of the great debate. It requires no great leap of imagination to see Kumarila among the great assembly. We can well imagine him enraged in opposition against the Chinese monk who was contending for a Mahayanist position based on the Yogacara of Kumarila's nemesis, Vasubandhu. Harsha began the assembly with great pomp, parading a gold image of the Buddha on the back of an elephant. The image was ceremoniously washed and placed on a towering pedestal by Harsha himself. The Chinese monk was invited to take the seat of honor presiding over the debate. The assembly was then informed on the theme of the debate and a summary of the points was hung on the main gate to which was attached a notice that if any one could find fault with the monk's argument or refute it, Hsuan-tsang would give his head. For the first five days the debate continued smoothly converting many prominent Hindus and Hinayanists to the Mahayana doctrines of Hsuan-tsang. This state of affairs aroused both Hindus and Hinayanists to bitter resentment and jealousy. A faction of the Hinayanists plotted to assassinate the Chinese monk, but when Harsha caught wind of the scheme, he issued an edict threatening to cut off the head of anyone who attempted to harm the monk and to cut off the tongue of anyone who so much as spoke ill against him or his Mahayana teachings. Although this decree returned temporary order and civility to the assembly, the Brahmins continued to murmur and fester with resentment and on the final day of the

three week assembly a group of Brahmins set the main pavilion on fire with arrows. In the chaos a hired assassin drew a knife on Harsha, but Harsha himself disarmed the would-be assassin and banished the offending Brahmins from the territory. In such a context, it is difficult to discern whether the debate was won by the power of the pen or the sword. In fact, the whole incident illustrates the inseparable relation between the pen and the sword in establishing the ascendancy of a politically patronized religious stance. After Hsuan-tsang had returned to China, Harsha was finally murdered in 648 by a Brahmin plot carried out by the army, and subsequently avenged by his allies from China, Tibet and Nepal who sacked over five-hundred Indian walled towns and villages capturing and beheading a large population of Hindus. The death of this last Gupta Buddhist king foreshadowed the decline of Buddhism in India. Kumarila's pen was perhaps as mighty as the sword in vanquishing the tide of Buddhism which vied with Hinduism for a royal Gupta patronage. Vasubandhu had been born on the ascension of the first Gupta King; Kumarila exited the world in the Vedic flame about the same time the last great Buddhist king departed his domain in death. Like the blind old Samson who gave his life pushing down the pillars of Dagon's temple, Kumarila "destroyed more Buddhists in his death than in his life."

Kumarila's *Slokavartikam* displays a sense of urgency to give primacy to action and not to the Upanisadic emphasis on knowledge (*jnana*). Veda is more important than Upanisads. The emphasis was on this worldliness so much so that the *Mimamsasastra* had come to be regarded by the orthodox as more kindred to Materialism (*Charvakadarsana*) than to any of the orthodox (*astika*) systems. Kumarila's task was to re-establish the viability of Vedic ritualism in the face of prevailing orthodox Hindu and Buddhist opponents. He was a Brahmin defender of the Hindu social order (*sanatanadharma*). While our concern centers on the ontological autonomy of objects, its defense and refutation, we must bear in mind Kumarila's overarching mission-- a defense of the authorless Veda and the certainty and efficacy of the Hindu way of life.

By Kumarila's day, Vedic ritualism had fallen into disrepute. It had suffered attacks by antagonists both within and outside the pale of Hindu orthodoxy. His mission was to restore the Mimamsa to orthodox *(astika)* status and defend Vedic ritualism from its devastating Buddhist critique. Kumarila is lauded as the greatest champion of Vedic ritualism and recognized as one of the most influential forces instrumental in effecting the decline of Buddhism in India. In the *Sankara Digvijaya* of Madhava, Kumarila is reputed to have said that the Buddhist teachers with their following used to propitiate kings through whom the people were persuaded to accept Buddhism and disregard Vedic tradition.[15] This tactic incited the likes of Kumarila with righteous indignation and contributed to the popular contempt largely responsible for Buddhism's decline in the place of its birth.

According to at least one tradition, Kumarila and Vasubandhu's disciple, Dharmakirti, had a legendary encounter. Dharmakirti, seeking knowledge of the Hindu philosophy, disguised himself as a slave and entered the service of Kumarila Bhatta who is reputed to have had five-hundred male and five-hundred female servants. So impressed was Kumarila with Dharmakirti's service that Kumarila expounded the secret doctrines of Hinduism to him. Armed with the understanding of an insider, Dharmakirti dismissed himself from Kumarila's service and engaged many Brahmins in a debate which lasted several months. Dharmakirti prevailed and converted many Brahmins, including Kumarila himself, to Buddhism.[16] A slightly different account of the same legend is recorded in *Sankara Digvijaya* of Madhava wherein Kumarila confesses that his ignorance of Buddhist thought prevented him from defeating Dharmakirti in debate.

According to yet another source, Kumarila returned the favor to Dharmakirti, disguised himself as a Buddhist monk and learned the secret doctrines of the Buddhists in order to refute them. While among the Buddhists, Kumarila is reported to have wept

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[15] *Sankara Digvijaya* of Madhava, 7.90.

[16] Taranatha and Dpag-bsam-Ijion-bzan, *Chos-byun* (Ed. by Sarat Chandra Das).

upon hearing the Veda refuted. Suspecting Kumarila, the Buddhists threw him off the roof of a tall building. On the descent, Kumarila exclaimed : "If *Srutis* (Veda) are authoritative then I shall live." For the reservation contained in the word if and for hearing the *shastras* in disguise (*vyajena*), Kumarila lost one of his eyes. The *Sankara Digvijaya* records that Kumarila committed suicide. He submitted his body to the fire in order to expiate (*apakarisnuh*) his two sins. He deceived and defeated his own Buddhist teacher, and he practically denied God. When Kumarila's body was half burnt on the pyre, Shankara implored him to write a *Vartika* on his own *Bhasya*. Kumarila retorted that there was no time. Shankara entreated Kumarila further and offered to revive him by yogic powers, but Kumarila declined to dignify Shankara's request in preference for the flames which expunged his guilt and transported him to heaven (*svarga*) in a blaze of glory that would restore Vedic ritualism to its place squarely within the *astika* house. The encounter with Shankara is unhistorical by modern standards, but it is quite historical if we take seriously the chronicles of Vedanta's tradition. In any case, the Vedantic tradition itself regards the encounter to be historical fact. Shankara, by most reckonings, succeeded Kumarila by at least a century. Nevertheless, their encounter is legendary, dramatizing the historical indifference that was paid to Vedanta by all. Even by the 13th century, reference to Shankara's system is conspicuously absent in such exhaustive compendia as the *Sarvajnasiddhi* of Ratnakiriti.[17]

Legendary accounts notwithstanding, Kumarila can be located squarely in the seventh-century, a period characterized by political and intellectual turmoil. Buddhists and Hindus vied for royal patronage and it was the Buddhists' success in this regard that incited Kumarila to jealousy. As Kumarila saw it, political patronage of Buddhism was tantamount to usurpation of the social order (*sanatandharma*). The legendary encounters, more chronologically plausible, between Dharmakirti and Kumarila

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[17] Steven Goodman, *A Buddhist Proof for Omniscience*: The "Sarvajnasiddhi" of Ratnakirti. Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1989.

accentuate the political and material benefits of Indian intellectual debate. Dharmakirti and Kumarila both resort to espionage, infiltrating enemy ranks in order to gain access to secrets. These secrets became the indispensable ammunition with which competing factions did intellectual battle. Those who were better equipped to defeat their opponents had first hand knowledge of the enemies' secrets. In any case, Kumarila's thorough and detailed critique of Buddhism contained in the *Slokavartikam* evidences profound understanding of Buddhist teachings, and vice versa. Their knowledge of each other's tradition was thorough and the debate was very formal and professional. Even a century later, the great Shankaracharya did not demonstrate as deep an acquaintance with Buddhist thought. It was not Vedanta, but the Mimamsa which rescued Hindu orthodoxy from the otherwise overwhelming tide of Buddhist growth and popularity.

We have said that authors are not important. The discourse is between traditions and texts. However, the legends of Kumarila lend a personal texture to what might otherwise be dismissed as impassioned scholasticism. The Vedic flame in which Kumarila exited the world ignited a Hindu renaissance responsible in no small measure for the decline of Buddhism in India. Commensurate with his station in life, Kumarila shouldered the responsibility to uphold Hindu orthodoxy in the name of social stability (*sanatanadharma)*. As far as Kumarila is concerned the Vedic system is in place and it works. There is no need for *jinas*, heroes who seek to rescue people from the Hindu house of pain.

2.2 Kumarila's Textual Tradition

The roots of Mimamsa extend back to the shrouded antiquity of the Brahmanas, the ritual texts to which the Mimamsakas attach far more importance than any other portion of the Vedic corpus, including the earlier Mantras and the later Upanisads. Inquiry into the rituals is very old and it is the theme of the *Srouta sutras* whose aim is to

systematize and simplify the intricacies of Vedic ritual. However, it was not until about 200 BCE that Jaimini composed his *Mimamsa sutras*, a collection of 2,700 verses comprising the foundational text on which the subsequent Mimamsa tradition developed. By Jaimini's day, considerable controversy and conflicting opinions about how the various rituals should be performed occasioned the need for systemization of sacrificial details. Jaimini's *Mimamsa sutras* served to codify and uniformalize details of Vedic ritual performance. He inaugurated Mimamsa as a method of Vedic ritual exegesis. Central to this exegetical method is the assumption that all Vedic sentences are injunctive speech acts. Vedic verses are concerned with promoting or inhibiting actions, especially ritual actions. Sacrifice *(yajna)* is the prescribed Vedic means for fulfilling predetermined material and moral aims. Mimamsakas stress the need for accuracy in detailed, methodological performance of rituals. Their correspondence theory of knowledge demands it; there is no room for improvisation. Unless each prescribed ritual act is performed accurately, the ritual will not accomplish the desired end. Sacred objects are neither arbitrary nor incidental. Objects, especially ritual objects, possess properties appropriate to the aim for which they are to be employed. Not just any object will do. Jaimini's *Mimamsa sutras* deal with over a thousand topics all subordinate to the central concern of Jaimini's *sutras*: sacrifice (*yajna*) and duty (*dharma*). A correct and thorough understanding of the details of sacrifice comprises the knowledge of *dharma*. Jaimini defined *dharma* as that which the Vedas commend as conducive to happiness.[18] The principal contribution of Jaimini's work establishes detailed exegetical methodology for understanding the meaning of Vedic verses. Thus the meaning of Mimamsa, the investigation of principals for interpreting the Veda. Mimamsa's comprehensive and coherent vision of the world centers in the cosmic sacrifice. The sacrifice was not only central to Mimamsa's world-view, it was all encompassing of it. In the simplest possible

[18] Jaimini's *Mimamsa Sutra*, Sutra 2.

terms: the universe is the cosmic sacrifice.[19] The world as the sacrifice is beginningless and endless. The eternal sacrifice, not God, is the genesis of the world. The perpetually performative cosmic sacrifice constitutes the very nature, structure, meaning and value of the universe itself. Action, especially sacrificial ritual action, is primary because it is the ordered movement of the world itself. Sacrifice is the supreme value, an end in itself, its own telos. It is not the enactment of dead ritual, it is an act in which something of ultimate value is relinquished, not to gain anything, but simply because the act is inherently valuable and therefore meaningful in and of itself. To lose sight of the centrality and ultimacy of the sacrifice is to miss the substance and soul of Mimamsa altogether. The early Mimamsa of Jaimini regarded sacrifice as an end in itself, not as an instrumental means to attain some higher end. The sacrifice is the ultimate aim and its performance is inherently valuable. Meaning and value are grounded in the objective reality of the universe. That reality is the sacrifice itself. Early Mimamsa was not anthropocentric.[20] It was neither centered in nor preoccupied with separate interests of human beings. It places the sacrifice, not humans or God(s), in the center, and gives meaning to people by subordinating humanity to the sacrifice and not the sacrifice to human interests. Humanity and the world itself is created and sustained by the cosmic sacrifice which is ritually reenacted by human beings, not for themselves, but for the sake of the sacrifice. The world and humanity is born of and for the sacrifice, lives through the sacrifice, and offers itself in sacrifice to the sacrifice.[21] Human life and meaning are conceived, sustained and culminated in the sacrifice. Mimamsa is a veritable ontology of action.

Buddhism attacked Vedic sacrificial ritualism, denouncing it as useless and foolish. Mimamsa arose as a philosophical system (*darshana*) in order to defend the truth

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[19] Thomas Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition* , p.24.

[20] Francis Clooney, *Thinking Ritually*. p. 163.

[21] *Rg Veda* 10.90.

of Vedic sacrificial ritual against the Buddhists who denounced it, and against fellow Hindus who devalued it by subordinating it to knowledge *(jnana)*.[22] I conjecture that the Yogacara doctrine of ***niralambana*** was specifically aimed at destroying the belief in the efficacy of ritual objects. From Kumarila's point of view, the Yogacarins were raping ritual objects of their ontological status and truth value and robbing them of meaning and utility. Thus the controversy about objects is a crucial issue. If ritual objects are empty, then the Vedas and sacrifices are empty and unnecessary, even useless. For Kumarila the issue is a matter of life and death, his own as well as the entire cosmic and social order. For Kumarila and the entire Vedic ritual performative community, Vasubandhu must be wrong -- dead wrong.

Later Mimamsakas, beginning with Sabara, shifted to a more anthropocentric view of sacrifice as an answer to the central criticism lodged against it. When the sacrifice has been performed, there remains only a pile of ashes and no verifiable result. If there are no certain grounds on which to be sure of desired results, human beings have no motive to act. It fell to Sabara and Kumarila to bridge the gap between the ritual action performed and the alleged, though unseen result (*adrista*), not verifiable by perception or inference. They bridged this gulf with the doctrine of *apurva* -- a potency latent in the self and brought to fruition by correct enactment of Vedic directives. Kumarila's Mimamsa subordinated the sacrifice to the attainment of salvation (*moksa)*, but never lost sight of the sacrifice as the locus of ultimacy for meaning, value, and truth. For the Mimamsa tradition, *moksa* was not absolute union of Atman with Brahman, not a meta-social condition of pure being. Neither was it a realm where the Vedas and sacrifices would no longer be necessary. Though subordinated to human interests, the sacrifice was not reduced to a mere instrumental means which could be discarded like a raft once it had transported the faithful to the other shore. In *moksa* the Vedic sacrifice

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[22] Francis X. Clooney, *Thinking Ritually*, p. 195-196.

resumes its supremacy. Even in their vision of *moksa* the Mimamsaka does not lose sight of the sacrifice as the ultimate ground on which *moksa* rests. Sacrifice is not only the means for achieving *moksa*, it is the very nature and structure of *moksa* itself. The sacrifice is a means to transcend human limitations in fulfillment of human interests, but the sacrifice itself is not to be, indeed cannot be, transcended. When human needs and interests are swallowed up in *moksa*, all that remains is the sacrifice itself -- the eternal drama that precedes and survives humanity. Sacrifice gives humanity birth, life, and meaning, and then consumes humanity in the promised fulfillment of its own interests. But the sacrifice never consumes itself. It supersedes humanity, suspending both itself and humanity in perpetual eschatological postponement. The universe, as Kumarila sees it, is bigger than humanity or human interests. Our place in it, whether in this world or another, is subordinate to the sacrifice, the structure, and ordered action of the universe itself. The essence of the universe is performance, not a static mode of being no matter how pure nor a ceaseless flow of consciousness-only.

The Mimamsa differs from all other Indian traditions by declaring the Veda to be the authorless, eternal words of revealed truth. Revealed truth is mediated by words, the interpretation of which is by no means easy. Thus, the need for Mimamsa as an investigation of the principles for proper interpretation of Vedic texts. It is only by means of this reasoned investigation that the Veda will yield truth. The complete title of Kumarila's treatment of Vasubandhu is *Autpattikisutre Niralambanavada*, calling attention to the fact that it is a critique in the name of the infallible Veda. The foundation and ultimate authority for Kumarila's claim is the authorless Vedic text composed of transcendent words and sentences. The Mimamsakas attribute this authorless status to the Vedas, not to secure their theory of the eternality of Vedic words, but to secure the meaning of ritual independent of any external source. The sacrifice itself is a kind of

linguistic structure, with its own internal message, grammar and syntax.[23] Vedic words are not created. They are performative speech acts with no speaker. All Vedic sentences commend some action to be performed. The scripture is pure injunctive speech that invokes human action. The scripture does not describe things in themselves (*siddha vastu tattva*); it reveals what is to be achieved (*sadhya vastu tattva)*. Scripture talks about something to be aimed at and accomplished. The scripture aims at cognitive actions to make a difference in life.

There is no Hindu consensus regarding scripture's role in salvation. Even within orthodox Hinduism the differences on this theme are fundamental. For instance, the Vedanta of Shankara reads the Vedas as descriptive of Brahman, the knowledge and realization of which constitute salvation *(moksa);* Shankara equates salvation *(moksa)* with meta-material, meta-social, pure being. The Mimamsa of Kumarila Bhatta reads the same authoritative texts as primarily injunctive, providing the impetus for those ritual and moral actions which eventuate in the attainment of happiness (*svarga)*. Kumarila equates salvation with envisioning the moral and material happiness of humanity in this life and beyond (*purusartha)*. Shankara and Kumarila differ not only on the nature and role of scripture in salvation but also on the very nature of the "salvation" to which the scriptures lead . The issue between Kumarila and Shankara concerns the question of whether or not salvation is a consequence of ritual and moral actions. Shankara and Kumarila have fundamentally different answers to this question based on radically different visions of scripture. According to the Vedanta of Shankaracharya, salvation consists in recognition of "that thou art" (*tat tvam asi)* - which means recognition of human identity or self as what universally and forever is (*siddhavastu*). Salvation is a thing in itself, full and massive, and not subject to human actions. Salvation consists in

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[23] Uma Marina Vesci, *Heat and Sacrifice in the Vedas* . This study applies the same type of critique employed by modern structuralists seeking a 'grammar' of myth. See also the same author's "Sacrifice seen as an ambivalent action" in Proceedings of the XIII Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. 1980.

suspending all action, ritual and moral. To that end, the scripturality (*shastratatva*) of the Upanisads does not consist in actions that we need to perform but in dismissing actions altogether, thereby recognizing our essence that transcends all actions. There is no agent and no act, no I and no other; salvation consists in overcoming difference.

To this Kumarila frankly says in the first place there is no Brahman, if by Brahman we mean an entity which always is and cannot become anything other than what it is. If there is such a thing, it is scripturally, religiously, and morally useless, and so is the inquiry into such a thing. If Brahman is a thing with which we can do nothing, if we cannot know it or do anything with our knowledge of it, and if we dismiss all language to reclaim it in silence, what good is such a being? Why should the scriptures aim at or human beings do anything to achieve this Brahman?

Kumarila's difference with Shankara is so fundamental that Kumarila even questions the scripturality of Shankara's whole system of thought. There is no scriptural verifiability (*shastratatva)* in the Vedantic discourse. The very nature of inquiry cannot be about Brahman if Brahman is a thing in itself. Inquiry can only be about deeds that will be performed to realize ends which scripture has predetermined, but which we do not yet possess . Thinking, including scriptural thinking, is not a thing in itself, nor is it a descriptive account of a thing in itself; it is merely an instrumental reason (*sadhana)* with which to achieve predetermined ends. The object of thinking is a teleological, ordered movement of mind and body (*sadhya*); it is a case of what will be acquired, not something which ontologically already is (*siddha*), and therefore is autonomous to human affairs. Meaning and value do not consist in dissolving human existence in an abstract essence, in a metaphysical phantom. Human existence is purposeful and teleological; it wants to acquire predetermined ends and to find the most efficient means to those ends. To exist is to mediate the means with the ends. It is in this mediation that thinking is born. Thinking is an activity human beings do who desire to be somewhere they have not yet arrived. Accordingly, scriptures seek to achieve salvation through

commands, and they recommend certain actions to reach that end. No language, especially scriptural language, can transcend act-oriented concerns of ordinary human beings (*vyahara prayogat*). Kumarila says salvation is possible only through performative - not descriptive - speech. One who says the scriptures merely describes the metaphysical thereness of what we already are; such people are mad (*pramatta*). They are unreflective and uncritical because they misuse the mission of language - *purushartha* - what has to be done - not a reality which is beyond all human actions. They lack critical reflection and common sense (*apreksvan*).

The difference between Kumarila and Shankara is total; they propose conflicting visions of human nature, the world, language, truth, and value for which they both claim scriptural verification. Kumarila defines scripture as a body of performative speech that commands us to inquire about what is to be done and what is to be avoided, and he proposes the scriptures themselves as the means to the end.[24] The scriptural word is action oriented. The Veda, according to Mimamsa, is injunctive speech which induces action. *Sabdavijnana* is knowledge of something to be done, derived through word. Scriptural injunction (*shastra*) is the means of knowing meta-sensory things, *dharma and adharma*, disclosed through verbal cognition. The Veda is the only source and means for knowing what should and should not be done. The Mimamsakas make it their business to demonstrate that the study of the Veda is itself a *dharma*, a duty enjoined by the Veda itself. The act of knowing takes place when the scripture speaks. Language, according to the Mimamsakas, is meant to be at the service of action (*kriyarthavat*), especially ritual action. Language does not speak for its own sake, nor does it merely intend to refer to what is there. It speaks for the sake of others, such as the hearers, and commands them to action. "Because *Sabda* is of no use for itself (*nisphalatvena sabdasya*) one ascertains through its competence (*yogyatvat*) that it is a means toward the cognition of meaning

[24] *Brahmasutra* 1:1:4, Vhvacaspati Mishra, Bamati Banaras, vol. I, p. 126-127.

which in its turn is an instrument for fruitful activity."[25] This in turn is the way to salvation.

Action is of prime importance for the Mimamsakas. What leads us to act is usually an injunction or command formulated in words. But words alone do not move us to act. Action is conceived only when we grasp the meaning of the commands. Therefore since the understanding of meaning leads to action, and because meaning (and its understanding) are transmitted through language (*sabda*), the primary purpose of language is to make us act. *Sabda* entails all of those characteristics which provoke us to act. Meaning, especially religious meaning, imparts a world vision. It communicates coherence, order, and tranquillity, but also engages us in active concern; it translates continued and committed concerns into deeds. Meaning is conceived in the union of word, intention, and action. Meaning indicates a movement. This movement is imperative, not indicative. It does not describe; it engenders an urge to act. The meaning scripture yields is not an abstract or static notion, but an active commitment seeking to concretize itself in the fulfillment of human hopes and dreams. Meaning attracts us to act or repels us from acting. It is never neutral. It does not describe a state of affairs in the indicative mood; it is movement motivated by an imperative. "Those who are desirous of *svarga* should perform sacrifice."

A question is in order here. If the Veda is authorless, how can its purport be teleological? The performance of this Vedic injunction anticipates a desired end. The authorless, and therefore intentionless, nature of the Veda does not preclude its purposiveness. Religious and sacramental acts presuppose intention. The Mimamsakas locate the motivation and intentionality in the human hearer who performs the injunctions, not in the Vedas from which those directives are issued. We understand that in Classical India purposiveness was preceded by intentionality, and intentionality preceded the agent. From Kumarila's point of view, the *shastra* has no agency, no

[25] Kumarila Bhatta, *Slokavartikam*, pp. 238-241.

intentionality of its own, and therefore is not purposive by and for itself. Purposiveness has to do with human beings who have the intentionality for salvation, and this intentionality entails agency of the hearer. The hearer alone is the locus of intention. To say the Veda has no intentionality of its own is not to say it is useless; its usefulness is the source of the Vedic word having power to make its meaning known, disclosing the otherwise inaccessible means to attain pre-determined results. It reveals the purposive end toward which its adherents strive. Both the means and the soteriological end are unveiled in the injunction, "Those who are desirous of *svarga* should perform sacrifice." The fact that Mimamsa locates intentionality in the human being who desires to attain *svarga* does not render the Vedic word bankrupt of purposiveness.

As we have seen, the Veda is believed to be autonomous to human consciousness and therefore does not stand in need of human beings to invest it with *telos*. The Vedic sentences spell out purposive mandates and guarantee prescribed means to accomplish predetermined ends. The transcendent word is efficacious in being the means to producing both seen and unseen results, in this world and the next. Vedic injunctions enjoin ritual and moral means to achieve both material and spiritual results. When heeded and enacted in a formally correct way, Vedic injunctions yield predictable results. The word's inseparable relationship to its meaning constitutes its inherent purposiveness. The Mimamsaka does not look outside of the airtight relation between sound, word, and meaning for an independent source that invests language with teleological purpose. The Veda speaks from a transcendent realm in which the relationship between word and meaning is beginninglessly and eternally fixed prior to entering into the mind of man. The sacred text is self-evidently true and stands in need of no external criteria for validation. The pre-existent and transcendent speech is the agency through which the world is brought into being. The Vedic house is a meaningful

world, providing the linguistic framework in which human consciousness discovers and performs the discourse about being in the world, including salvation.

Sruti denotes the very theme and method of the Veda. It is that which is heard. It is well known that the Vedic corpus was transmitted orally from generation to generation long before it was committed to writing. When we say the scripture is meant to be heard, however, we do not have in mind the oral method of inter-generational transmission. The primacy of hearing underscores the communicative nature of the scriptural word. Mimamsa has often been misrepresented as exalting the sound of a word above its meaning. While it is true that the *mantra* is believed to be efficacious by means of its correct pronunciation, the investigation of the meaning of Vedic words and sentences is the particular domain of Mimamsa. This investigation is pursued in the oral context constituted by the teacher-student relationship. The notion that the seers *(rsis)* are so named because they "saw" the Vedic texts is not a mixing of metaphor. They understood what they heard. Both seeing and hearing are metaphors. The sense organs are incapable of being in contact with *dharma*. Though *dharma* is an object of cognition, it is incapable of being cognized through sense-perception. To say that the scriptures are meant to be heard entails more than the audition of a magical *mantric* noise. The Veda is the only source for knowing *dharma*, knowledge of which is prerequisite to the pursuit of salvation. To hear the scripture aright entails understanding its dictates through faith in the scripture alone.

Hearing is metaphorical, but also quite literal. Transmission of the text occurs within the context of a personal, sacred relationship between teacher and student. The context gives primacy to orality. While the scripture itself is a-personal, the mode through which it is communicated is highly personal. Scholars have well noted the inter-psychological dimensions peculiar to oral communication.[26] There are moral and spiritual prerequisites to hearing. Scriptural transmission does not proceed

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[26] Harold Coward, *Sphota Theory of Language*, Motilal Banarsidass, 1980, pp. 8-9.

indiscriminately. Only those who are morally and socially qualified are eligible to receive training in the scriptural lore. An *acharya* who cannot find a worthy recipient of his textual knowledge should burn the text or discard it in a river rather than teach it to an ill-suited candidate. The transmission is preserved by an unbroken line of trustworthy, morally, and socially qualified disseminators and recipients. The Brahmins attribute transcendence to sacred speech and derive their authority to hear by virtue of having heard those same sacred words. The power of mediation is in the hands of the Brahmins whose ordained role is to bring the text closer to the qualified people. There is exclusivity of privilege. Hearing is primary, but not indiscriminate. The scriptures contain the good of all and sundry, but only a few have access to its hidden meaning. There are prerequisite qualifications for hearing. The word is engaged in movement. The act of hearing presupposes the need to hear. Words have no intrinsic need to be heard. The need does not reside in the words themselves, but in the one who desires to hear them.

We have seen that the scriptures are autonomous to human consciousness. They are meant to be heard, purposive, and therefore efficacious in service of action as a means to promote human interests, visible and invisible, in this world and the next. These factors constitute the transformative nature of scripture. The word is the mediative means between this world and the next, linking the world of actualities with the world of possibilities. The Vedic word comes from above and beyond the human recipients in order to transform them from how they are to what they may yet become.

It should be carefully observed that Kumarila's entire project is subordinated to Mimamsa's overarching concern, the investigation and performance of what is to be done *(dharma)*. The reliable correspondence between means and ends is the only guarantee that actions will realize the aims for which they are performed. While this is equally the case for ordinary everyday actions as well as ritual actions, Mimamsa is especially concerned with the performance of *dharma*. *Dharma* is not ascertainable by means of

ordinary sense perception or inference. The only means of knowing *dharma* is the verbal testimony of the Vedic word (*shastra eva pramana).* The Vedic word establishes a direct one-to-one correspondence between words and the objects which they signify, a correspondence without which verbal meaning and fruitful activity are impossible. Mimamsa removes the nature of objects from the status of subjective obscuration implicit in Vasubandhu's position and raises them to an ontological stature. Mimamsa's doctrine of scripture as authorless text assures the infallibility of the correspondence between means and ends. It is because the Vedic text is authorless and beginningless that it can serve as a trustworthy source of knowledge regarding the nature and sanctioned performance of *dharma.* The authority of Kumarila's system rests firmly upon his esteem for the sacred word. The airtight correspondence between sound, word, and meaning constitutes the formula and bedrock which give coherence and certainty to the performance of efficacious action. Kumarila as a Mimamsaka represents the peculiar polar position that reckons scripture, and therefore the sacred speech act, as utterance without a speaker. This posture is perhaps the loftiest appraisal of the nature, function, and primacy of the scriptural word. It fixes forever an unassailable relationship between word, object, meaning, and action.

It is from this scriptural affiliation that Kumarila accuses Vasubandhu of practicing linguistic deception thereby sabotaging the intelligent and coherent world of discourse. Threatened by the sovereignty Vasubandhu attributes to consciousness, Kumarila fears that Vasubandhu has relegated too much to consciousness at the expense of the object. Vasubandhu imputes power to consciousness to construct objects out of sheer imagination. If objects have no autonomy from the consciousness that manufactures them, Kumarila's system, not to mention his entire career, becomes irrelevant. Kumarila identifies Vasubandhu's practice of linguistic deception as a kind of intellectual elitism that depicts ordinary human beings as incapable of facing the truth. This accusation may appear to be a case of the pot calling the kettle black in so far as

Kumarila is a Brahmin, an institution which bars the lowest caste from access to the text, and excludes all but his own caste from the morally acquired right to teach the text and to perform the most crucial and esoteric rituals necessary for the attainment of material and spiritual success. Nevertheless, Kumarila's charge against Vasubandhu is ironically on behalf of the common people. Kumarila champions the wisdom inherent in everyday life; he champions ordinary people, not mystics.

Commensurate with his station in life, Kumarila shoulders the responsibility to uphold Hindu orthodoxy in the name of social stability (*sanatanadharma).* Kumarila's world is a comprehensive system in which means and ends are wed together in a coherent cause and effect relation. If we perform the prescribed rituals properly, we can depend on predictable results. In spite of the measure of secret methodological gnosis inherent in the Vedic lore, Kumarila's system favors the common sense observation upon which all moral and ritual action is predicated, namely, that real means produce real ends. Kumarila may well ask opponents of this premise what kind of person takes recourse in using deceitful means to accomplish true ends, no matter how lofty?[27] The practical and moral implications of Kumarila's insistence that true ends require true means is far reaching. What evidence is there to show that ordinary people cannot appropriate and handle the truth beneficially? What sort of person, no matter how enlightened, would believe that human beings are like children whose imaginative world is so fragile that we dare not shatter their illusions by the imposition of truth? Kumarila does not want us to lose faith in the efficacy of truth. What is the evidence that demonstrates people are incapable of facing the truth and must be told half-truths for the sake of expediency? Does not common sense tell us that truth is a common property and not the exclusive insight of enlightened yogis?

[27] "Are Convenient Fictions Harmful to Your Health?" Philosophy East West, Vol. 43, no. 1, January 1993.

2.3 *Shastra* as Genre

There are fundamentally two different notions of what constitutes *shastra*. Those who emphasize the root *shas* equate *shastra* with the scripture itself. *Shas* indicates that which disciplines and thereby redeems. Ramanuja and Vallabacharya are representative exponents of this approach. The scripture alone is the evidence about the veracity of truth claims scriptures make. The scriptures are self-evidently true and need no external criteria for their validation or verification. The second notion of *shastra* follows from an emphasis on the root *tra* which indicates the instrumental means of salvation. This is *shastra* as commentary. As commentary, *shastra* is that body of literature which assumes that the scripture is coherent as a linguistic body, entailing no self-contradiction or gaps, *(samanvaya)*. *Shastra* in this sense is the method through which a formal articulation is made to show that the scripture presents a unified theme. Competing traditions argue about what that theme is, hence the tradition of claims and counterclaims, accusations and counter-accusations. The author of *shastra*, for instance, Jaimini's *Mimamsa-sutra*, inaugurates a new school of thought and provokes counter-*shastra*, an inauguration of a competing school of thought. Each *shastra* claims conformity to the scripture, accusing others to be incoherent, incomplete, and down-right deviant. A claim is made that the contrary claims of the scriptures are questionable. *Shastra* is an independent, comprehensive, and systematic reading of scripture from a certain point of view which delineates where others have failed. For instance, Kumarila identifies action as the unifying theme of all Vedic utterances, whereas Shankara insists that the same scriptures are primarily descriptive, not injunctive. *Shastra*, in this sense, is the formulation of a point of view conceived in the womb of the text *(shastra yoni)*. This view subordinates epistemology to *shastra*. Something is true because it conforms with the sacred text. *Shastra* is a tool through which to present a complete, comprehensive formulation of a point of view consistent with the scripture.

The *shastras* also include sub-commentaries, that is commentaries on commentaries. The sub-commentaries are reiteration, defense, and explanation of the intellectual tradition inaugurated by a commentary. Kumarila is commenting on Sabara's *Bhasya*, which in turn is already a commentary on Jaimini's *Mimamsa sutra*, itself a commentary on the Veda. Kumarila's "*Niralambanavada*" chapter is a sub-commentary on *Sabara's Bhasya*, but has it no retrospective reference to Jaimini. Although Sabara, not Kumarila, was contemporaneous with Vasubandhu, we maintain that Kumarila's "*Niralambanavada*" sustains and draws out the debate with Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika*. In light of this ongoing concern for contemporaity, why do we pit Kumarila against Vasubandhu who antedates Kumarila by several centuries? Would it not have made more sense to stage Kumarila versus Dharmakirti, the well-known Buddhist logician with whom Kumarila may have engaged in face-to-face public debate? There is appropriateness and precedence for elucidating a debate between parties who, though not chronologically contemporaneous, are nevertheless thematically engaged in endless controversy. Dharmakirti and Dignaga, the two most likely candidates for sharing the stage with Kumarila, only repeated the arguments introduced by Vasubandhu. Furthermore, it is our contention that Vasubandhu inaugurated an entirely new method for critiquing the realist's stance regarding the ontological status of objects, an approach which neither Dignaga nor Dharmakirti followed.

Several verses in the "*Niralambanavada*" entail a discussion of some subtlety or nuance of the meaning intended by the inaugurating author, Sabara. The celebrated irrelevance or inaccessibility of the author's intention not withstanding, the arguments in the *shastras* often hinge on the clarification of the author's intention in employing a specific word. The *Vimsatika* and "*Niralambanavada*" are replete with examples demonstrative of this very concern. Kumarila closes his text, accusing Vasubandhu of misunderstanding the Buddha's intention regarding the discourse on objects. In the *Vimsatika* Vasubandhu accuses all non-Mahayana Buddhists of the exact same thing.

Kumarila blames Vasubandhu for taking the Buddha's words too literally; Vasubandhu accuses Non-Mahayanists of the exact same thing, though for totally opposite reasons. This is the gordian knot which ties the two texts together in so many turns of intended sense and counter-sense, but no non-sense; the texts are as serious as life itself. Another example of the importance of discerning the author's intention occurs in the very first verse of the *Vimsatika* where Vasubandhu clarifies what the author of the *Das Bhumi sutra* meant to say. The discussion concerns the intended meaning and extended sense of the word *cittamatra*. Vasubandhu is obliged to explain his predecessor's word choice in order to substantiate his own substitution of a different term, *vijnaptimatra*, in the place of *cittamatra*.[28] Similarly, Kumarila cites verbatim the words of Sabara in order to settle a dispute, the crux of which concerns Sabara's intended use of the word *eva*. Clarifying and defending the predecessor's word selection is no small part of the procedure followed in the commentarial tradition. It is not the mere perpetuation of a fossilized system of interpretation; it is dynamic in its mission to apply afresh the principles of the predecessor's text to new and confounding challenges. We will return to each of these knotty problems in their respective contexts, hoping to unravel the snarl or else be hopelessly tied up in the discordant lines which blur distinctions between speaker and hearer, agent and intention, intention and action, action and word, word and intention, intention and object, object and consciousness, consciousness and self, self and other, etc., etc.; but let us not lose sight of the core of the knot. The difference between waking and dreaming is on the line.

The very tenor and tone of *shastra* literature is this: All thinking is positional. Conceived in a position, *shastra* reiterates the position. It also is argumentative. The text is composed as argument cast in terms of a group-think facing another group-think (*paksa* and *purvapaksa*). No group-think is past or dead; it is forever present and speaks in its difference. Memories die hard. The voice (*purvapaksa*) with which Kumarila

[28] Vasubandhu, *Vimsatika*, commentary introducing verse 1.

contends is clearly none other than Vasubandhu's. The vocabulary of the discourse is precise. The very wording of Sabara's *Bhasya* and Kumarila's citation of the same indicate direct address of the *Vimsatika's* own articulations. Insofar as Vasubandhu was probably a contemporary of Sabara[29], we submit that the *Vimsatika* is the competing text which Sabara has foremost in mind.

In the course of commenting on Jaimini's *Mimamsa sutras*, Shabara inadvertently addressed the Yogacarin doctrine of *niralambana*. We have said that in Sanskrit *shastra* literature, a text presupposes a previous text. The occasion for commenting on the previous text is the arrival of a competing text whose challenges must be met. This challenge was the Yogacarins' doctrine of *niralambana*. The opponent's voice (*purvapaksa*) is represented in Sabara's *Bhasya* and reiterated verbatim by Kumarila in verses 24-5 of "*Niralambanvada*":

> All cognitions are without support like those in a dream;
> the nature of cognition as having no support is realized in dream ;
> even such notions of a waking person as 'it is a pillar' or 'it is a wall' are also cognitions and as such have no support.[30]

Sabara's critique of the celebrated "dreaming argument" is direct and brief, focusing on a single verse in Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika* Sabara's refutation centers on the failure of dream as an appropriate example (*dristanta*) in inferential reasoning. What Sabara treats in passing, Kumarila exhaustively refutes in two hundred and two verses several centuries later. The Yogacarin doctrine had evidently enjoyed great success in the intervening centuries, and Kumarila felt it necessary to expose the Yogacarin challenge to a more thorough critique. Whereas Sabara concentrated his argument on the example (*dristanta*), Kumarila issued his scathing criticism systematically over each of the limbs (*anvayam*) of syllogistic reasoning.

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[29] G.N. Jha. *Purva Mimamsa in its Sources.*

[30] *Nanu sarva eva niralambanah svapnavat pratyayah pratyayasyapi Niralambanatasvabhava upalakshitah svapne; Jagrato'pi stambha iti va Kudya iti va pratyaya eva bhavati; tasmat so'pi Niralambanah.*

It seems that the Yogacara notion of *"niralambana"* threatened to undermine Vedic orthodoxy more than any other single doctrine promulgated by the Mahayanists. The denial of autonomy to objects was tantamount to rendering the entire Vedic system irrelevant[31]. Buddhism, especially Yogacara's doctrine of *niralambana* attacked Vedic sacrificial ritualism, denouncing it as useless and foolish. It was in direct response to this particular doctrine that Mimamsa developed a philosophical defense for Vedic ritualism. I conjecture that the doctrine of *niralambana* was aimed at destroying the belief in the efficacy of ritual objects. From Kumarila's point of view the Yogacarins were raping ritual objects of their ontological status and truth value and robbing them of their meaning and utility. Thus the controversy over objects is crucial. If objects are empty, then ritual objects and sacred words are empty and useless, and so are sacrificial acts. In the introduction Kumarila stresses that the Yogacarins' position, if accepted, would be the utter undoing of all practical and meaningful activity.[32] Since, for Kumarila, meaningful and efficacious human action is rooted in the reality of external objects, the denial of ontological autonomy to those objects undermines fruitful human activity. No object, no action; no action, no meaningful existence. From the outset Kumarila accuses the Yogacarin of linguistic cunning, flawed reasoning, incoherence, violation of common sense, and violation of rationality. The Yogacarins depiction of the external world of objects is conveyed by their use of the term *samvrtisatya.*[33] The term connotes a variety of things, principal among which in this context are such notions as empirical, phenominal, and contingent reality. Kumarila argues that the terms *samvrit* (false) and *satya* (truth) are incompatible. For Kumarila *samvrit* is no different from false *(mithya)* in regard to the reality of external objects. Hence, the term *samvrtisatya* would

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[31] *Niralambanavada* 1-3.

[32] Ibid., 1-4.

[33] Ibid., v.5.

connote "false-truth" which, of course, is an absurdity. He accuses the Yogacarins of cloaking[34] the truth or disguising their position in deceitful language which is unworthy of professional, rational discourse.[35] Kumarila believes in the inherent rationality and wisdom of common people. A common person cannot be easily hoodwinked by such sophistry.

The lines of the "*Niralambanavada*" and the *Vimsatika* become quickly and easily entangled in knots. The intricacy of Kumarila's syllogistic reasoning in confrontation with Vasubandhu's "method of madness" makes it particularly confounding for the reader to discern and disentangle the crossed lines of the argument and counter-argument. The *shastra* is so comprehensive, involving so many conflicting issues that it is easy to lose track of the unifying thread of Kumarila's "*Niralambanavada*". The central and sustained focus of Kumarila's text is a refutation of the so called "dreaming argument". The reader's mind should not wander too far from dream. Whenever the text overwhelms the reader, it is helpful to bear in mind its central focus: the "dreaming argument". Kumarila sustains a 202 verse refutation of just a single verse from the *Vimsatika*. All of the loose ends of the *sutra* can be tied to this controlling concern. Kumarila announces his grievance with the "dreaming argument" in the introduction to his text:

> If, with respect to objects of perception, waking cognitions are not different from dream cognitions, then any one with common sense would simply lay down and go to sleep. Why bother to exert the effort and take the necessary pains of employing external objects as means to obtain a desired result if the fruits of our labors are no different from the pleasure that can be obtained without any effort in the dreams of sleep?[36]

[34] The term *samvrt* literally indicates a 'covering', hence Kumarila may be making a play on words here. By use of the word 'cover' the Buddhists are 'covering-up' their position, which if stated more honestly, would be rejected by common sense.

[35] *Niralambanavada*, v. 6-8.

[36] Ibid., v. 12-13.

Even if Shabara and Kumarila have to reconstruct the syllogistic formulation of Vasubandhu's assertion that 'life is but a dream', they manage to engage Vasubandhu in an epistemological discourse on the only terms available to Sanskrit philosophical disputation.[37] Neither Shabara nor Kumarila will afford poetic license to Vasubandhu. He must not be permitted to escape the rules and methods of responsible discourse, namely doing inferential reasoning *(anumana)* in defense of any claim *(paksa)*. There are rules and a method of responsible discourse. *Anumana* provides the rules and method.

Most of the everyday knowledge on which human beings act is derived through inference. *Anumana* literally means such knowledge that follows some other knowledge; it is the knowledge of an object due to a previous knowledge of some sign or mark *(linga)*.[38] The Nyaya defined *anumana* as the knowledge of an object, not by direct observation, but by means of the knowledge of a mark *(linga)* and that of its universal relation *(vyapti)* with the inferred object.[39] The object of inference is some fact which follows from some other fact because of a universal relation between the two. By means of *anumana* we arrive at the knowledge of an object through the medium of two acts of knowledge or propositions. Indian inferential reasoning was conceived and developed as an instrument for debate. The rules governing inference are inseparable from the rules for philosophical discourse.[40] Indian philosophy has distinguished two types of inference: one, to resolve a doubt in one's own mind *(svartha)* which does not necessitate the syllogistic steps, and two, inference for the sake of removing doubt from the mind of another *(parartha)*. Hence syllogistic reasoning *(anumana)* is done to

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[37] John Taber, "A Critique of the Dreaming Argument in Kumarila's Niralambanavada" in *Studies in Mimamsa*.

[38] *Nyaya Bhasya* I. I. 3.

[39] *Nyayamanjari* (Vizianagram ed.).

[40] Potter, Karl H., *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol. II: The Tradition of Nyaya-Vaisesika Up To Ganaesa, p. 182.

convince others of one's own point of view. The process of inference entails three terms and five members. The three terms are (1) the logical subject (*paksa*), that which is qualified, (2) the logical predicate (*sadhya*), the qualifier, and (3) the reason (*hetu*), which connects the subject to the predicate. Technically speaking, the subject (*paksa*) is the locus, the house in which the qualified resides. According to Indian theories of inference, the subject does not hang on its own in midair. Rather, it is the actual place of something that is perceived, and the place of something not yet perceived, but inferred. The predicate is what is to be inferred; it is the quality attributed to the subject. The reason (*hetu*) must be substantiated with examples from everyday lived experience. The examples are two types -- positive (*sapaksa*) and negative (*vipaksa*). The positive example offers an instance wherein the qualifier (*sadhya*) is always present, whereas for the negative example the qualifier is never found.

The stock example employed for instructing the novice in the art of inference is: The smoky hill possesses fire. The hill is the subject (*paksa*), the place where fire is not perceived but inferred. The fire is the predicate (*sadhya*) which is yet to be proved. The smoke is the reason (*hetu*) which demonstrates an invariable relation between the smoky hill and the fire. This invariable relation is called *vyapti*. Wherever there is smoke there is fire. Most systems of Indian philosophy agree in holding that *anumana* is a process of arriving at truth, not by direct observation, but by means of the knowledge of a universal concomitance between two things (*vyapti*).

Mimamsa's version of inferential reasoning relates these three terms to each other by means of a syllogistic process entailing three members or limbs of the argument (*anvyam*). Leaving behind the smoky hill and the fire, let us briefly state and illustrate those three limbs with reference to the component parts of the Yogacara syllogism which Kumarila constructs and then deconstructs. The *udaharana* is the statement of the invariable concomitance between the *hetu* and the *sadhya*, together with an example: All

cognitions are without support, like dream cognitions. The *Upanaya* is a statement of the application of the *hetu* to the *paksa*: Waking cognition is a case of cognition. And the *nigamana* is the conclusion announced: Therefore, waking cognition is without any corresponding external objects for its support. For the sake of clarity we identify the constituent parts of the Yogacarins' proposition reconstructed and presented by Kumarila. The *paksa* is [all (waking) cognitions]; the *sadhya* is [are without corresponding external objects as their support]; and the *hetu* is [the characteristic of being a cognition]. The limbs of the syllogism at issue within the structure of Kumarila's text are delineated below:

1 *Udaharana*- The character of being a cognition is (invariably concomitant with) possessing the character of having no corresponding external object as its support; e.g. dream cognitions.

2 *Upanaya*- Waking cognitions are a case of cognitions.

3 *Nigamana*- Therefore, waking cognitions are without support.

Bearing these three terms and three members in mind, we turn now to follow the elaborate and intricate details of Kumarila's refutation of the "dreaming argument".

2.4 The Strategy and Aim of Kumarila's Text

The standard procedure generally followed in the *shastras* begins with an examination of the topic itself, which in this case happens to be an investigation of the nature of external objects. After treating the topic itself, the author normally scrutinizes the various proofs advanced in its support. Kumarila will go directly to an examination of the proofs advanced in support of the Yogacarin theory because they are the basis of examining even the objects themselves. Hence, addressing the theories of perception and inference *(pramanas)* will necessarily entail a thorough consideration of the objects themselves. For the sake of avoiding needless repetition, Kumarila goes straight to the heart of the matter. The *pramanas* are the root, ground, or basis *(mulatvat)* of the

examination of the objects themselves. The *pramanas* constitute the touchstone by means of which the objects are examined. If the very instruments used to examine objects are faulty, then the examination could not yield valid results. Hence, an examination of the touchstone itself is rudimentary and indispensable to an accurate analysis of the objects to be examined thereby.[41]

The two types of *pramanas* considered in the *Bhasya* are perception and inference. Normally, one would be expected to examine perception first because it is generally regarded as the stronger of the two *pramanas*. But the author of the *Bhasya* has reversed the order of consideration.[42] He does so in the interest of economy of effort. To build an inference requires at least two perceptions. The first prerequisite perception enables us to discover the invariable relation *(vyapti)* between the qualifier *(sadhya)* and the reason or the distinguishing mark *(hetu)*. Whenever and wherever we see smoke *(hetu)*, we can safely assume on the basis of repeated observation that fire *(sadhya)* is not far away. The second prerequisite perception proves the existence of the smoke *(hetu)* in the hill *(paksa)*. Thus, if Mimamsakas can show the defective nature of the Yogacarin inference, they inadvertently nullify the Yogacarin perception in the process. If, on the other hand, the author of the *Bhasya* had followed the standard procedure of treating perception first, any subsequent treatment of the inference would have been superfluous. In this way the author of the *Bhasya* leaves no stone unturned, yet neither does he turn over any stone twice.

The central and controlling aim of this chapter is a refutation of the specific Yogacarin inference posited as the *purvapaksa*: "The cognition of pillar etc., is false because it is a cognition, just like dream cognition." The Yogacarin proposition is cast in the Mimamsakas' version of syllogistic form comprised of three limbs, *pratijna*, *hetu* and *udaharana*, and the verse has been syntactically rearranged to reflect this syllogistic

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[41] *Niralambanavada*, v. 18.

[42] Ibid., v. 19.

order.[43] This reordering is done in the name of the tradition, reiterating its coherence. Therefore Kumarila goes immediately to Sabara's text to recall that Sabara already offered an explanation and criticism of the Yogacarin inference. Kumarila carefully points out that even Sabara has been variously misunderstood by commentators in his own tradition.[44] He contends that Sabara has clearly identified the phrase "cognition of a pillar, etc." with only waking cognitions, not dreaming ones; otherwise the example (*dristanta*) would already be entailed in the subject (*paksa*), i.e. all cognitions would include dream cognitions.[45]

The word *niralambana* contained in the logical predicate (*sadhya*) is further qualified by Sabara as referring to "that which lacks an object external to itself."[46] This qualification is necessary in view of the fact that even the Yogacarin acknowledges that consciousness cognizes itself, not some ontological external entity over there in space. Sabara's refutation of the Yogacarins' inference centers on his demonstration of waking cognitions being qualitatively different from dream cognitions. Whereas dream cognitions are contradicted by subsequent waking cognitions, definite, immediate, non-erroneous, waking cognitions are not invalidated by subsequent well-ascertained waking cognitions.[47]

Only after having cleared the accusations leveled against the *Bhasya*, Kumarila inaugurates his own systematic attack on the Yogacarins' inference by thoroughly examining first the thesis as a whole (*pratijna*), and then each and every member of the Yogacarins' syllogistic inference: the *paksa*, *sadhya*, *hetu*, and *dristanta* respectively.

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[43] Ibid., v. 23.

[44] Ibid., v. 23-24.

[45] Ibid., v. 24.

[46] Ibid., v. 25.

[47] Ibid., v. 28-29.

The *Pratijna*

The rules for the proper analysis of any proposition necessitate that the subject (*paksa*) be qualified by the predicate (*sadhya*). The subject is that which is qualified; it is that to which something is attributed; the predicate (*sadhya*) is the qualifier, the attribute. Furthermore, according to the exegetical principles governing inferential reasoning used to convince others (*parartha*), in order to establish a propositional relationship the two things to be related must each be well-known to exist. If either one or both relata are not known to exist, no relationship can be successfully established. The Yogacarin proposition would be valid if both the subject and the predicate existed; however, by the Yogacarins' own confession, cognitions have no corresponding external objects. One communicates to others only by objective demonstration of the content of cognitions. That explains how one who hears comes to know the content of the speaker's cognition, and how discourse comes to assume a public texture. If the Yogacarin tries to communicate to others the proposition which itself is contentless and methodologically flawed, objectivity of truth and value is thereby lost.

According to the Yogacarin there is no difference between a cognition and its object; but the Mimamsaka maintains that both cognitions and their objects are real and have independent existence. Therefore, a distinction can be clearly drawn between them; however, the Yogacarin can make no such distinction on that basis. Accordingly Mimamsakas can prove the existence of external objects by means of valid cognitions, whereas Yogacarins cannot prove anything by means of valid cognitions because, according to them, nothing exists apart from the cognitions themselves. Therefore, Kumarila demonstrates that the Yogacarin proposition establishes nothing; it is bankrupt and empty, devoid of any intelligible meaning. Cognition, in itself, is abstract, and thus possesses no property by which one can differentiate between cognitions. However, specific, concrete cognitions can be distinguished from each other. According to the

Mimamsaka the differentiating property of cognition is the difference which exists between particular objects. But for the Yogacarins, because of their doctrine of *niralambana*, it is impossible to distinguish one cognition from another on the basis of difference in objects. The difference in objects between one cognition and another makes differentiation easy for the Mimamsaka, i.e. the cognition inherent in the speaker is different from that in the listener. Kumarila's point is that the cognition inherent in the speaker, namely, the Yogacarin who wants to explain a given cognition, cannot be distinguished from the cognition inherent in the listener. For the establishment of any inferential proposition two elements are required: subject and predicate. If all cognitions are equally non-existent, as the Yogacarin maintains, there can be no relation between the subject and predicate, nor between the speaker and listener. Subject, predicate, and their relation constitute three distinct cognitions, none of which the Yogacarin can distinguish from the others. For a statement to make sense, both subject and predicate are essential constituents and cannot be the same. When a participant in a debate speaks, it is the responsibility of the speaker to satisfactorily explain the statement; the Yogacarin fails to do so.[48]

Kumarila's recurring complaint is that the Yogacarin proposition makes no sense. Every proposition attributes a certain predicate to a subject. This condition can only be met if both the subject and predicate are established as real and distinct. He points out that the cognition arising from the Yogacarin proposition is predicated upon two other cognitions: first, the cognition of a characteristic, being false (*niralambanata*) and second, the cognition of the contrary, different, something that is characterized, waking cognition. However, if all cognitions are objectless, then the two prerequisite cognitions would be utterly impossible, i.e. there can be neither the cognition of the character of something nor the cognition of that something which it characterizes. The statement that attributes predicate to subject in the case of the Yogacarin proposition denies that there is

[48] Ibid., v. 36-37.

any real subject or predicate. Hence, even if the dreaming argument were true, it would not be about anything real.[49] For example, it is not valid to argue that a sky flower is fragrant because sky flowers do not exist. Throughout his elaborate treatment of the Yogacarin proposition, Kumarila repeatedly demonstrates that their claim fails to yield any intelligibility. Furthermore, even if one could somehow make sense of their assertion, the very cognition to which it gives rise would contradict and undermine the thesis itself because it asserts that all cognitions are without an object, whereas the cognition in question has this thesis for its object.[50] The Yogacarin may retort that the characteristic, namely, *niralambanata*, lack of an object, falsity, is not anything real; therefore to ask how it is related to the locus (subject) is an inappropriate question. Kumarila squelches this argument on the grounds that nothing whatsoever may be predicated of an unreal thing in spite of the fact that the Yogacarin is trying to say so very much about it.[51]

The *Paksa*

Kumarila begins his systematic treatment of each member of the thesis beginning with the locus (*paksa)*. The word *pratyaya* (waking cognition) as it stands in the locus may have four different possible meanings, none of which will render the Yogacarin proposition intelligible. *Pratyaya* may be regarded as the object of cognition (*karman*), the instrument of cognition (*karana*), the agent which cognizes (*kartri*), or the act of cognition (*bhava*). Kumarila announces his intention to demonstrate that the Yogacarin

[49] Ibid., v. 35.

[50] Ibid., v. 36.

[51] Ibid., v. 38-40.

cannot establish his doctrine of *niralambana* upon the basis of any of the four possible alternative grammatical derivations of the term *pratyaya*.[52]

The first alternative derivative of *pratyaya* is *karman*. *Karman* is that which is being cognized *(yaha pratiyate)*; it is the object of the verb or the object of the act of cognizing. Just as the subject of any sentence must have a predicate, so a cognition must have an object. The second option which Kumarila specifically mentions is *bhava*, the act of cognizing. This is an act of knowing directed toward something other. That other is the very ground (*alambana*) and genesis of cognition (*pratyaya*). So the very act of knowing an object indicates a movement from the knower to the known. Kumarila proposed his own peculiar doctrine which located the property of knownness in the object. In the process of being known, an object is transformed from simply being there to being known. Kumarila sees this transformation as taking place in the object so that the knownness of the object is likened to the cooked condition of rice. Through the act of cooking, rice becomes cooked; through the act of knowing, an object takes on the property of being known. So knownness comes to reside in the object. The third possible meaning is *kartri*, the agent of the act of cognition, i.e. the subject who cognizes. The fourth and final remaining derivation of *pratyaya* is *karana*, the instrument of cognition. In this sense it is the means through which the act of cognizing occurs. Those means are the sense organs -- the eyes, ears, nose, etc.. These are the four possible grammatical derivations of the word *pratyaya*, none of which, as Kumarila will show, can be properly called *niralambana*.

Regarding the first definition of *pratyaya* as the object of cognition, Kumarila himself accepts the notion that an object of cognition is without an object. In other words, if *pratyaya* is taken to mean "object of cognition", Kumarila has no disagreement because any given object of cognition does not require an additional object as its object. For example, in order to serve as the object (*alambana*) of a cognition, a cup needs no

[52] Ibid., v. 41.

object (*alambana*) other than itself. This, however, is clearly not the sense in which the Yogacarin proposition uses the term *pratyaya* since such a designation only states the obvious. The remaining three alternative meanings for *pratyaya* involve serious contradictions in the Yogacarin position in so far as none of these significations can occur without an object.[53] The word *pratyaya* can be taken to mean the agent or instrument in relation to the act of cognizing its meaning; but if the words "cognition" (*pratyaya*) and "false" (*niralambanata*) are without an object, then the words are without a meaning. To lack objectivity, for Kumarila, is to lack meaning since all meaningful activity, including the act of cognition, is rooted in the ontological and external reality of objects.[54]

According to a principle of Sanskrit grammar, although an agent usually refers to some sentient being, a word can be regarded as the agent (*kartri)* of expressing its own meaning, i.e. the word itself carries and conveys its own meaning.[55] Meaning is inherent in the word. The grammatical implication for understanding this verse is that if the word *pratyaya* stands for the subject who cognizes, then even the word *pratyaya* itself, along with the person who cognizes, could be properly regarded as the agent. The same may be said in the case of *karana*, the instrumental means of cognition. For example, in the statement "He expresses this through these words", the words themselves are proposed as instrumental for conveying the idea of the speaker. Applying this grammatical nuance to the Yogacarin proposition which attributes *nalambana* to *pratyaya*, whether *pratyaya* is intended to signify the agent or instrument of the act of cognition, in either case the word *pratyaya* has no ground (*alambana)*. Since the only possible basis (*alambana)* is the meaning of the word concerned, it becomes quite obvious that *pratyaya* as the subject of the Yogacarin proposition is utterly naked of any possible signification. Thus,

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[53] Ibid., v. 41-42.

[54] Ibid., v. 43-44.

[55] Coward, Harold G., *Sphota Theory of Language*, p. 89-101.

Kumarila exposes a technical flaw (*jati*) in the Buddhist argument. This *jati* is termed *paksa anukti*, non-verbal expression, i.e. words which fail to convey any meaning. Since, at this point, Kumarila has exhausted all possible meanings and uses of the word *pratyaya*, the Yogacarin may presumably appeal to whatever meaning is sanctioned by popular usage. However, Kumarila aptly shows that in popular usage cognition is always cognition of an object.[56] Furthermore, if the word "cognition" indicates something that lacks an autonomous object, as the Yogacarin would like to define it, then the Mimamsaka will not allow it; by the same token, if the word "cognition" is taken to mean something that does have an object, then the Yogacarin will not allow it. It is a well-established principle of classical Sanskrit discourse that participants employ terms whose meanings are understood and accepted by both parties.[57] But time and time again Kumarila and Vasubandhu cannot even agree on the definitions of terms. Yet another example of their complete opposition is found in their views of cognition: Kumarila regards cognition as a quality of the soul while Vasubandhu views cognition as an independent entity.[58] Kumarila grants that in some cases the meaning of a word expressing the locus (*paksa*) of an inference may itself be under dispute; however, such is not the case here because the Yogacarin assertion that a word (in this case *pratyaya*) is without an object amounts to saying that a word is without a meaning.[59] It makes no sense to use admittedly meaningless terms and expect to be taken seriously.

The real substance of Kumarila's thought is implicit in the grammatical analysis of the tripartite elemental combination of the word *pratyaya*. There are three distinct elements of the term which, when joined together with some internal modifications, give rise to the full-blown sense of the word. The constituents of the term are *"prati"*, a

[56] *Niralambanavada*, v. 45.

[57] Ibid., v. 46.

[58] Ibid., v. 47.

[59] Ibid., v. 48.

prefix meaning "facing" or "opposite", "*i*", the verbal root signifying to go, and "*a*", the suffix whose various renderings have no bearing on this issue. However the first two elements of the term are germane to the argument here. All Sanskrit roots which indicate the act of going also imply the act of cognizing. The verbal root "*i*" is always transitive; it must have an object. Irrespective of the various ways Yogacarins may choose to understand the suffix "*a*", the necessary transitive nature of the verbal root "*i*" can never be affected. Because of the grammatical fact that the verbal root '*i*' is inherent in and indispensable to cognition *(pratyaya)*, the term can never signify a cognition which has no connection with an object. A *pratyaya* by name must have an *alambana* by nature. The subject must name an object -- for without an objet it is unworthy of being used in discourse, ordinary or philosophical. But the Yogacarins do just that -- they misuse and mutilate a word so often and so severely that it bleeds to death. They do not let a word carry its own sense and integrity, its right to meaning. The Yogacarin asserts that *pratyaya* has no *alambana*; therefore, naming it *pratyaya* on the one hand, and denying to it any *alambana* on the other hand, does violence to the life and integrity of the term.

Now that all four possible derivative meanings of *pratyaya* have been dismissed, Yogacarins may presumably argue that they intend *pratyaya* in its conventional sense.[60] The term that we translate here as "conventional meaning" is *rudirupena*. The importance of this term in the context of this argument can be fully appreciated in light of its place in Sanskrit's four-fold classification of words. Meaningful words are divided into four groups called *yogica, rudha, yoga-rudha,* and *yogic-rudha*. A *yogica* word is that which yields meaning in strict accord with its derivation, the underlying power of a word to restrict its scope and meaning. The word *pachaka* is illustrative of words of this type because it always means nothing more or less than "a cook". A word of the *rudha* class does the opposite; it expresses its meaning neglecting its derivative sense. *Rudhi* is

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[60] Ibid., v.45.

the denotative power present in words of this class, an example of which is the word *kusala*, which in its derivative sense means "one who brings *kusa* grass." However, *kusala* is never used in its derivative sense; rather, by convention, it has come to signify an expert in some particular art or branch of learning. Another example is the word *mandapa* which means "one who drinks the juice of the cooked rice" in its derivative sense, but denotes "altar" in conventional use. A third class of words are called *yoga-rudha* because they are partially derivative and partially conventional. The word *punkaja* aptly illustrates this class. Its derivative sense is quite literally "born of the mud"; by convention *(rudha)*, it refers exclusively to the lotus plant. Though many things may be regarded as "born of the mud", only the lotus is so designated by the word *punkaja*. Hence *punkaja* is characterized partly by its derivative sense and partly by its conventional use. There are a few words which comprise the remaining class of words called *yogic-rudha*. Depending on the context, words can be taken either in their distinctively derivative sense (*yogica*) or in their conventional meaning (*rudha*). An example is the word *udvhaid*; its yogic meaning refers to "that which comes out after breaking the ground", i.e. a sprout, but its *rudha* meaning indicates the particular Vedic sacrifice for acquiring cattle. The implication for understanding Kumarila's point is that *pratyaya* in its normative use always indicates connection with some object even if theYogacarin neglects its *yogic* sense and proposes it as *rudha*. Kumarila implies that whether *pratyaya* is derivative or conventional, the proper meaning of any particular word is determined by popular usage -- not by philosophical debate. Even Patanjali has denied that grammarians give meanings to words; rather, they merely explain whatever standard use a word has already acquired.

The *Sadhya*

The next turn of the text entails a thorough investigation and analysis of the *sadhya*, namely lack of an object, falsity *(niralambanata)*. Having thoroughly exhausted

his examination of the *paksa* and exposed its numerous defects, Kumarila subjects the *sadhya* of the Yogacarin proposition to the same rigorous scrutiny. Kumarila initiates this discussion by arguing that if lack-of-object means a lack of all objects whatsoever, then a cognition would not be characterized as lacking an object even according to Vasubandhu himself since the Yogacarin is known to believe that the cognition necessarily has itself as its object.[61] This belief is odd, even down-right self-contradictory. Furthermore, if lack-of-object means lack-of some object or other, then all cognitions will have lack-of-object even according to Kumarila himself because, as Kumarila readily acknowledges, a cognition of X does not have a not-X for its object.[62]

In verses 57-59 Kumarila raises what may at first glance be regarded as a strictly formal and therefore trivial issue. However it is a point which Vasubandhu addressed at considerable length and depth. Vasubandhu had already faced this challenge from within his own Buddhist house. The Theravadins were asking Vasubandhu why the Buddha spoke of external objects, *ayatan, rupa*, etc., if he denied their reality. It seems Vasubandhu is faced with the burden of the middle. He risks losing credibility if his own tradition and the different -- in this case Kumarila's Hinduism -- will not let him speak on grounds of formal, professional, impropriety, even incompetence. Kumarila challenges the Yogacarins' right to even utter the word "external object" *(bayartha),* since they fundamentally deny the reality of any such entities.[63] Kumarila subjects the Yogacarin proposition, namely, that cognition has no external support *(alambana),* to a careful

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[61] Ibid., v. 51.

[62] Ibid., v. 50.

[63] Kumarila entertains the possibility of a subtle modification of the proposition previously advanced by Yogacara in verse 52, in which *alambanata* was denied even to specified external objects. The conjectured shift in Yogacara's proposition here involves a restatement of the proposition such that externality is attributed to that which is already attributed to cognition, namely *niralambanata*. i.e., The reformulated proposition predicates an attribute to the attribute. There is nothing inherently illogical about introducing an adjunct to an attribute, however, in this case it involves the Yogacarins in an absurdity. The technical designation of the logical defect which Kumarila exposes here is *visesana-visesana aprasiddhi.* It is a case of qualifying *niralambanata* with something which they themselves do not recognize to exist, namely externality.

grammatical analysis, according to which the qualifier *(sadhya)* and the qualified *(paksa)* must each be known separately before they can be related to each other. One who does not know the qualification *(visesana)* beforehand cannot possibly know or infer the qualified *(visesya)* which is purported to possess the qualification *(visesana)*. By the same token, one who does not know beforehand both the qualification *(visesana)* and its adjunct *(visesana* of the *visesana)*, cannot relate them to establish a valid inference. In the specific context of the Yogacarin proposition, none of the three constituent relata, namely, the cognition *(visesya)*, lack of support *(visesana)*, nor the externality of objects *(visesana* of the *visesana)* are known independently beforehand by the Yogacarin. The import of Kumarila's criticism is that the Yogacarin cannot attribute baselessness *(niralambanata)* to cognition any more than externality can be attributed to baselessness *(niralambanta)*.

Kumarila is a stickler for grammatical precision. He calls our attention to the minutist components of words. Since he is dwelling on the *sadhya* in this section of the text, he invites us to squint with him in scrutinization of the negative particle prefixed to *alambana* -- "nir". In Sanskrit there two different modes in which the negative particle conveys its meaning. The negative particle is called *paryudase* when it conveys a positive meaning. It may be so construed with anything other than a verb and implies something positive, not negative. If the Yogacarin wishes us to understand the negative particle as *paryudase*, the meaning of the Yogacarin proposition would be that cognitions depend on something different from the cognitions themselves. The negative particle is called *nisedhe* when it is construed with the verb, in which case it signifies a negative meaning. If the Yogacarin intends for us to understand the negative particle as *nisedhe*, the Yogacarin proposition would mean that cognitions do not depend on anything, including cognitions themselves. This assertion would inadvertently imply the existence of something different from the cognition itself. Thus, regardless of which way the

Yogacarins intend to understand the negative particle, either way the existence of something different from cognition itself, is implied; hence the contradiction of their proposition. Kumarila grants that Yogacarins may modify their proposition so that objectless *(nalambanata)* is predicated of anything except cognition itself. In view of this qualification, Yogacarins might propose that the whole world is a case of identity (non-difference) on the grounds of mere knowability. However, Kumarila denounces such a proposition as vacuous because everyone agrees that merely on the basis of all things being equally knowable, no differentiation between objects can be established.[64]

Kumarila gives Vasubandhu the benefit of presumption. He presumes that Yogacarins may modify their stance to assert that cognition does not depend on anything that is totally different from the cognition. If they alter their position they would be guilty of abandoning their previous position. The Yogacarins have maintained all along that so called external objects are identical with cognitions, denying that external objects are different from cognitions. By means of disguise *(samvrti)* cognitions only appear to have various shapes and colors, etc.. However, in order to explain their position in harmony with lived experience, Yogacarins take recourse to an imagined *(kalpita)* means of differentiation between cognitions. Theoretically, the Yogacarin can admit of no difference between the blue color and its cognition, nor between the red color and its cognition. By the same token, theoretically he cannot differentiate between the blue and red cognitions. When one believes that difference is only imagined *(kalpita)* to deny that which is totally different from cognition is nonsense.[65] Denial of what exists makes sense, but the denial of something which does not exist is self-contradictory. Thus Kumarila calls attention to a contradiction implicit in the Yogacarins' proposition of non-difference between the cognition and that which it cognizes. He simply will not tolerate

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[64] Ibid., v. 60.

[65] Ibid., v. 61.

the co-existence of two distinct capacities in a single cognition. The same cognition cannot be simultaneously that which grasps and that which is grasped.[66]

Even as Kumarila paints the Yogacarins deeper into the syllogistic corner, he tries to present and give due consideration to every possible reformation of their proposition. He entertains the possibility that the *paksa* of their proposition is restricted to the word *pratyaya* itself, and does not refer to a cognition generated by the word *pratyaya*. If the proposition is understood in this restricted sense, then objectless *(niralambana)* would be predicated only of the word *pratyaya*, distinct from both its meaning and from any cognition produced thereby. The new import of the word objectless *(niralambana)* here would signify that objective support *(alambana)* does not inhere in the word *pratyaya*. The effect of such a revised understanding of the proposition would simply deny that the word *pratyaya* is an objective basis *(alambana)* of a cognition. Kumarila has no objection to this denial; hence the recurrence of the defect called *siddhasadhanam*, which is a case of trying to prove what is already accepted by the opponent.[67] *Buddhyutpadanasakti* is the power of producing a cognition. Kumarila's criticism in this connection is that if the word *pratyaya* is incapable of producing any signification, then the Yogacarins' use of a word can never produce any meaning, whether the word is *niralambana* or any word. Consequently, Kumarila correctly observes that it makes no sense for the Yogacarins to continue the process of syllogistic reasoning since it is ridiculous to offer a reason in support of a proposition which does not assert anything at all.[68]

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[66] Ibid., v. 62.

[67] Ibid., v. 67.

[68] Ibid., v. 68.

The *Hetu*

Having exhaustively examined both the subject (*paksa)* and predicate (*sadhya)* of Yogacarin proposition and found them both riddled with technical and logical flaws (*jatis* and *nigrastanas)* of every kind, Kumarila makes a transition in verse 75. He turns his attention to the reason (*hetu)*, which Kumarila will demonstrate, is also defective from every possible angle. This next major shift inaugurates discussion of the most important term in the discourse on inference, i.e. *vyapti.* The issue concerns whether or not a *vyapti* can be established between the *hetu* and the *sadhya.* The argument revolves around the lack of common understanding between Mimamsakas and Yogacarins regarding the nature of universals and particulars. Kumarila exposes a logical fallacy in the very reason proposed in support of the Yogacara proposition. The three requisite characteristics accepted even by Yogacarins for the proper establishment of the *hetu* are: 1) *paksasattva,* the presence of the reason qualified by the *vyapti* existing between the *hetu* and the *sadhya* in the *paksa*; 2) *sapaksasattva,* the presence of the reason qualified by either, the positive *vyapti* (*anvaya vyapti)* or the negative *vyapti* (*viatareka vyapti)* in the *sapaksa* and *vipaksa* respectively; and 3) *vipaksasattva*, the absence of reason in all other places where the *paksa* is known not to exist (*vipaksa).* These cognitions comprise the three-fold division of logical fallacies of the *hetu.*[69] The import of Kumarila's statement in the first half of verse 75 is that if Yogacara accepts the cognition represented by their proposition as false, then they are vulnerable at all three points. In the second half of the verse Kumarila explains that even if they accept the *salambana* of those three requisite characteristics, they commit the logical fallacy known as *anaikantiko,* i.e. the presence of the *hetu* where the *paksa* does not exist. In this latter case Yogacara would be predicating "the character of being a cognition" as invariably concomitant with

[69] Raghavendra Pandeya, *Major Hetvabhasas: A Formal Analysis*; also Nandita Bandyopadhyay, *The Concept of Logical Fallacies.*

"*niralambana*" in "all waking cognitions"; this clearly involves the defect of *anaikantiko* as far as the testimony of ordinary people's lived experience throughout the entire world is concerned.

As if to offer assistance to his opponents, Kumarila proposes a slight modification in the Yogacarin proposition. Whereas their earlier *hetu*, "the property of being a cognition", inevitably involved the three requisite cognitions instrumental for the proper establishment of the *hetu*, the modified proposition would advance a *hetu* which excludes the three requisite cognitions. However, in order to ascertain the difference between the three requisite cognitions and the fourth cognition, i.e., the *hetu* exclusive of these other three, a fifth cognition is necessary. The question arises whether this fifth differentiating cognition is true (*satya*) or false (*mithya*). If the Yogacarin admits its validity, then there remains at least one *salambana* cognition, namely, the one cognition through which the distinction is made. The only option open to the Yogacarin is to regard this fifth differentiating cognition as false (*mithya*); however, if they say it is false, then the difference between the three cognitions requisite for properly establishing the *hetu* and the cognition that excludes those three could never be established. Consequently the modified form of the proposition would have no justification.

Kumarila believes he has compelled the Yogacarin to accept the difference between the cognition of a pole, etc., and the cognition of their own *hetu*. The cognition of a pole, etc., is declared by Yogacarins to be false, but the reason must not be false if it is to establish the *sadhya* of their proposition.[70]

The *Dristanta*

Dream is the root metaphor in Vasubandhu's discourse of the world. The world of objects, especially in waking life, are imagined objects, not different from the consciousness that imagines them. Kumarila questions the propriety of using dream

[70] *Niralambanavada*, v. 77.

objects as concrete examples. If the Yogacarin refuses to acknowledge the relative validity of a waking cognition by which any particular dream cognition is contradicted, the Yogacarin would be compelled to grant validity to patently false dream cognitions.[71] G.P. Bhatt has discerned the implication of Kumarila's criticism in his remarks on this passage.

> There is no means of valid knowledge which can prove the unreality of external objects. Perception which reveals external objects directly contradicts the idealist theory instead of supporting it. Inference depends on perception. The universal premise of an inference is derived as an empirical generalization from a direct experience of external objects and as such it cannot prove the non-existence of external objects. The idealist arguing in support of his theory brings forward the following argument: All waking cognitions are devoid of external objects, because they are cognitions like the cognitions in a dream. Kumarila points out several logical fallacies in this argument in the *Niralambanavada* section of the *Vartika* and puts forward a counter-argument as follows: The cognition of external objects in the waking state is valid, because it is not contradicted by subsequent experience, like the cognition of the falsehood of dreams.[72]

The technical designation for a reason which fails to be associated "exclusively" (*aikantiko)* with the *sadhya* is called *anaikantiko*. The inconsistency regarding their reason arises because the reason sometimes exists where the predicate (*sadhya)* exists and sometimes exists irrespective of it.[73] Kumarila thinks he has conclusively established that subsequent contradictory cognitions of the waking state constitute the only possible litmus test for the validity and invalidity of cognitions.[74] The example to which Kumarila appeals is the case of subsequent opposite and stronger waking cognitions which prove that other cognitions are invalid.

Kumarila does not give much credence to the Yogacarin appeal to yogic cognitions. He refuses to engage in the politics of yogins, who are not apt to attest to any

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[71] Ibid., v. 78-79.

[72] G.P. Bhatt, *The Basic Ways of Knowing*, pp. 46-47.

[73] *Niralambanavada*, v. 81-82.

[74] Ibid., v. 88-91.

consensus of cognition in the Yogic state.[75] Kumarila reasons by analogy, drawing a generalization from the particular. Since dream cognitions are contradicted by virtue of being invalid in relation to waking cognitions (a conclusion which Kumarila imagines the Yogacarins have been compelled to accept), likewise waking cognitions are contradicted by yogic cognitions. According to the Yogacarin, both dream and waking cognitions are flawed because they are characterized by several invalidating properties such as bias, lack of due attention of the mind, attachment, aversion, and the like. Further, since waking cognitions are flawed, yet also instrumental for contradicting dream cognitions, Kumarila draws the generalization that the property of being flawed belongs to those cognitions which contradict other cognitions, like dreams, etc.. It follows that the yogic cognitions instrumental for contradicting waking cognitions are also flawed simply because such cognitions are instrumental for contradicting other cognitions.[76] It is a proverbial case of not being able to have one's cake and eat it, too. Whether we accept the generalization Kumarila draws or not, he has exposed the double standard with which the Yogacarin wishes to treat waking cognitions. On the one hand waking cognitions serve to contradict and invalidate dream cognitions; on the other hand, the same waking cognitions are allegedly shown to be contradicted and invalidated by Yogacara yogic cognitions. One and the same waking cognition cannot be simultaneously valid and invalid. The reason for invalidity, whether of waking or dreaming cognitions, is reduced to having the several defects mentioned above. Yogic cognitions are allegedly free from such defects. However, by virtue of being instrumental for contradicting waking cognitions, yogic cognitions must be like waking cognitions since waking cognitions are also instrumental for contradicting dream cognitions. Hence yogic cognitions must also be characterized by bias, attachment, aversion, lack of the mind's due attention, etc..

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[75] Ibid., v. 91-96.

[76] Ibid., v. 99-100.

According to the *Bhasya's* formulation of the opponent's voice *(purvapaksa)*, the reason provided by the Yogacarins' syllogism is "the characteristic of being a cognition". That which is to be inferred includes both the *paksa* and the *sadhya*; specifically what is to be inferred is the *paksa* attributed with the *sadhya*, i.e., all waking cognitions are *niralambana*. It is not merely the *sadhya* which is to be inferred. What is to be inferred is the *sadhya's* connection with the *paksa*. From the outset the *paksa* is already known without establishing the *sadhya* attributed to it. The *hetu* and the *paksa* are already known to go together. However, no such relation has yet been established between the *sadhya* and the *hetu*. Kumarila's criticism is that the *sadhya* of the proposition is not different from the *hetu*. The *hetu* must be distinguishable from the *sadhya*. This is a fallacy of the *hetu* called *sadhasama*. This fallacy occurs when the *hetu* is non-different from the *sadhya* in its technical sense, i.e., the *sadhya* as being attributed to the *paksa*. Hence the proposition that all waking cognitions are *niralambana* is not different from the reason provided, namely, the characteristic of being a cognition.

The character of being a cognition *(pratyatva)* is the reason *(hetu)* proposed by the Yogacarin. Regarding this reason Kumarila points out that the Yogacarin has three alternatives by which to explain their *hetu*. Their choice is either restricted to cognitions of the waking state, or of the dreaming state, or common to both states. If the Yogacarin chooses the first alternative, waking cognitions only, the fallacy of non-establishment of the *hetu* occurs *(asiddhi)*. The reason must be present in both the subject *(paksa)* and the example *(dristanta)*. The example *(dristanta)* is "like dream cognitions". Obviously, if the reason *(hetu)* is restricted to waking cognitions only, it cannot be present in the example *(dristanta)*.[77]

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[77] "*Vyaptasya heto paksadharmataya prasiddhi, tada bhava asiddhi*"

The main constraints of inference are the *vyapti* and *paksadharmata*.[78] If the second alternative of dream cognitions only is chosen, then there is non-establishment of the subject *(paksa)*. Since the *paksa* is restricted to waking cognitions, the *paksadharmata* (presence of the *hetu* qualified by its *vyapti* with the *sadhya* present in the *paksa)*, is not established. Succinctly stated, the first alternative lacks *vyapti* and the second alternative lacks *paksadharmata*. Hence neither can serve as a valid reason.[79]

In response, the Yogacarin is presumed to ask why a reason is invalid simply because it is not available in the *paksa* or *sapaksa*. Bearing in mind that *vyapti* and *paksadharmata* constitute the constraints of inferential reasoning, the *vyapti* can only be proven on the basis of *sapaksa*. The *sapaksa* accounts for dream cognitions only. Hence no *vyapti* between the *hetu* (the characteristic of being a cognition), and the *sadhya*, namely "*niralambana*" can be established by appealing to the example of dream cognitions.

If the third alternative which includes both waking and dreaming cognitions is chosen, then the *hetu* will have to be accepted as a universal (*jati* or *samana)*. The universal is a property common to all individuals belonging to a particular class. There are two fundamentally different Hindu views regarding universals. Nyayakas accept universals as being inherent in individuals, which implies that the universal is different from the individual in which it resides. The Nyayakas hold that the universal and individual are two separate and real entities; with only a slight qualification, Mimamsakas accept the non-difference between the universal and the particular. Mimamsakas accept universals, but they are non-different from individuals. However, Yogacarins do not accept universals at all and may argue for either the idea of similarity or *apoha*.[80] *Apoha* indicates the difference of one thing from all that is not that. This is

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[78] *Tarka Bhasya* of K.S. Mishra, "*anumanasya dve ange vyaptihi paksadharmata chi*"

[79] *Niralambanavada*, v. 105.

[80] Ibid., v. 102-104.

the Yogacarins' negative explanation of the universals of other systems. Nevertheless, because Yogacarins do not accept universals, it is inappropriate for them to appeal to the principle of universals as their reason.[81] To opt for the third alternative therefore would involve the Yogacarin in serious flaw, contradicting their own position, which is known as *svabachona virodha*.[82]

Kumarila is a complete realist. Consciousness is not deceptive. If dream cognitions have *alambana*, why are they regarded as erroneous? Even cognitions of the dreaming state have contents, but the contents are mistaken in point of time and / or space. The place might even be correct sometimes, but never the time.[83] Error may include an admixture of reality and falsehood; it is the undue association of two real things. Such errors may be the consequence of one or more factors -- insufficient light, distance, a defect in the sense organ, etc.. Kumarila asserts that even the notion of emptiness (*sunyata*) is not entirely devoid of objective support (*alambana*). In the case of an empty pot, the pot remains the locus or ground (*alambana*) of the emptiness. Emptiness must always be emptiness of something from something else. Kumarila's doctrine of negation (*abave*) entails two factors, (1) *pratiyogin*, that which is denied, and (2) *anuyogin*, the locus in which something is denied. In both the denial of horns on the hare's head and the case of emptiness (*sunyata*), Kumarila's doctrine of *abave* accounts for the presence of an objective basis (*alambana*).[84]

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[81] Ibid., v. 104.

[82] See Nandita Bandyopadhyay, *The Concept of Logical Fallacies*.

[83] *Niralambanavada*, v. 108-109.

[84] Ibid., v. 109-112.

2.5 Final Considerations

What remains in the plan of the text is a discussion of whether or not the Yogacarin has the right to enter into professional discourse given their denial of reality to the externality of objects of cognition. According to Kumarila, the Yogacarin does not even believe in the truth of the terms and the means by which the discourse is conducted. This concern is sustained for nearly fifty verses, a quarter of the entire text, indicative of the seriousness with which Kumarila regards this matter.[85] It is a universal principle that those who do inferential reasoning for the sake of convincing others must themselves be convinced by the same reasoning; otherwise how would the proposing party have arrived at the justification of his own position?[86] The proposer of a proposition cannot justify his own conviction on the basis of reason which he himself does not regard as valid. The proposer cannot justify his conviction to himself, let alone to someone else who asks for an explanation of the reasons by which the proposer arrived at his own conclusion.[87]

The context of this argument is the Yogacarin contention that their reason is regarded by them as *samvrti satya*. Whereas Kumarila has been complaining that it is inappropriate for the Yogacarins to propose a reason which they themselves do not believe to be real, the Yogacarins may be supposed to insist that they do not entirely disbelieve in the validity of their own reason. For the Yogacarin the reason is regarded as strategically, pragmatically, and provisionally valid (*samvrti satya*). However, Kumarila points out that a predicate (*sadhya*) which the Yogacarin regards as ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*) cannot be proved on the basis of a reason which is regarded to be only provisionally true (*samvrti satya*). Ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*) cannot be established on the basis of false-reality (*samvrti satya*).[88] Kumarila's criticism is based

[85] Ibid., v. 128-177.

[86] Ibid., v. 135.

[87] Ibid., v. 144.

[88] Ibid., v. 152.

on the fact that in the first half of verse 155, which represents the voice of the Yogacarin, the Yogacarin uses the verb *asit* (existent) in reference to false-reality (*samvrti satya*); yet, in the second half of that verse, the Yogacarin uses the verb *nastita* (non-existent in reference to ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*); in other words, the reason (*hetu*) is nonexistent with regard to ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*). Kumarila concludes that one cannot prove the existence of one thing on the basis of the non-existence of another. The Yogacarin argument implies that in reality there is no reason. If it is unreal, how can it be instrumental for proving something which is real? *Niralambanata* is absolute reality. The reason in support of *niralambanata* is not as real. One cannot prove what is absolutely true (*paramarthasatya*) by means of that which is only apparently true, but really false (*samvrti satya*). Truth cannot be known by untruth.

The final issue of contention is the ontological status of impressions (*vasanas*). Kumarila tries to demonstrate that the Yogacarin cannot account for the differences among impressions proceeding from an allegedly differenceless consciousness. Further, Kumarila exposes what he regards as insurmountable problems in reconciling the Yogacarins' doctrine of momentarieness with the beginningless process of impressions (*vasanas*).

Since the effects of *vasanas* are different from each other, the causal *vasanas* must be different. Kumarila insists that the Yogacarin proves the difference of effects, namely memories, in order to infer differences in their respective causes.[89] If cognitions are to be differentiated, differentiation must be done based on the contents of cognitions. Kumarila accuses the Yogacarin of circularity because, on the one hand, Yogacarins posit different memories as the basis for different *vasanas*, and, on the other hand, the difference in memories is accounted for on the basis of different *vasanas*.[90] Memory and the experience through which memory is born have the same content. Experience is the

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[89] Ibid., v. 178.

cause and memory is the effect, but they are virtually indistinguishable because all are without content. Thus, Kumarila concludes, even the memory born of experience through a *vasana* cannot have any content.[91]

The Yogacarin doctrine of momentariness entails a total destruction of each cognition, leaving behind no trace. Kumarila argues that no causal relation is possible between a material cause which does not survive with its effect.[92] When the locus of a *vasana* is totally destroyed, the *vasana* cannot move from one cognition to another. Even if a single *vasana* were somehow transferred from one cognition to another, it could not be regarded as momentary. Memory is an effect of the destruction of preceding *vasanas*. A memory cognition, according to Yogacarins, does not arise until its cause in the preceding *vasana* is destroyed. If the *vasana* is not destroyed, its effect, namely memory, can never occur.[93] Kumarila concludes his text by claiming to understand the Buddha's discourse on *objects* better than the Yogacarins themselves: "Whereas the Buddha intended only to shake his followers' faith in external durable objects and their utility, the followers mistook his words in a literal sense."[94]

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[90] Ibid., v. 179.

[91] Ibid., v. 180-181.

[92] Ibid., v. 181-182.

[93] Ibid., vv. 193-197.

[94] Ibid., v. 202.

CHAPTER THREE

VASUBANDHU AND HIS TEXTUAL TRADITION

3.1 The Life and Times of Vasubandhu

Vasubandhu was born into one of the greatest unifying periods in Indian political history. The imperial Gupta dynasty had united all of North India under centralized authority. Their century-and-a-half reign, in the midst of which Vasubandhu lived his eighty years spanning several Gupta kings, is often heralded as India's Golden Age. The Guptas gave generously from the royal treasuries to promote intellectual and artistic excellence, inviting to their court such eminent contemporaries of Vasubandhu as the poet, Kalidasas, and the Mimamsa philosopher, Sabara. The Golden Age was inaugurated when the Guptas, ignoring Prakrit, adopted Sanskrit as the official court language. Consequently this was a prolific period, producing texts on ancient knowledge in such varied fields as law, philosophy, logic, poetics, architecture, sculpture, painting, dance, music, and even love-making. This proliferation of scholarly and literary activity was the result of the new fashion in language. Sanskrit, perfected by grammarians and poets on the basis of Panini's rules, gave almost mathematical exactitude to terminology. Sanskrit offered philosophers and poets alike a common vehicle to express the most delicate shades of meaning, precise observations, and imaginative flights of fantasy. Even the Buddhists abandoned Pali to enter the Sanskrit world of discourse. Though a gap of two centuries separates Vasubandhu and Kumarila, the universalization of Sanskrit reunites and sustains them in continual controversy.

Although most of the Guptas, with the notable exception of Harsha, were not Buddhists, they all gave great concession to Buddhism, taking monks into confidence as councilors, and implementing public policies patterned after the program of Asoka. The Gupta administration provided rest stations for weary travelers, and free hospitals

accessible to all. The great Buddhist university at Nalanda rose to prominence under Gupta patronage; copper plate inscriptions, excavated there a century ago, reveal that Gupta kings donated six residential halls for students at Nalanda. Fa Hsian, a Chinese Buddhist monk who arrived in India at the close of Vasubandhu's century, attests that the Guptas sponsored an annual assembly for expounding Buddhist doctrines, and awarded the monks with title deeds of lands and villages for the support of monastic institutions.[95]

Evidence suggests that Vasubandhu may have been born in Ghandara about the same time as the first Gupta emperor, Chandragupta I, who ascended the throne in the same district.[96] Vasubandhu's presence in the royal Gupta court is well-attested, and his tutelage of one of the "young kings" is corroborated by several sources.[97] Some scholars have noted that one of Chandragupta's sons, or at least half-son, was a "young king"; to install a son as ruler of a kingdom within his still living father's domain was a common tradition of the Gupta era.[98] One such "young king" was Samudragupta.[99] While we cannot know with certainty the precise identity of the "young king" whom Vasubandhu tutored, it is tempting to envision the monk, Vasubandhu, in the court of Samudragupta, the "child king" who may have reigned at the same time Vasubandhu resided within the Gupta court.[100] Even if we cannot establish the historicity of a direct, immediate, tutorial relationship between Vasubandhu and Samudragupta per se, it requires no great flight of imagination to place the tender, impressionable "child king", Samudra, at Vasubandhu's feet, listening to Vasubandhu's council on the ideals of Buddhist kingship. We may well

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[95] Fa Hsian, *Travel Records*.

[96] Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu* , p.11.

[97] see Anacker, p. 8-11 for the several chroniclers who assign Vasubandhu's tutelage to various Gupta kings.

[98] see J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View*. The king's son's education began at age eight and continued until he ascended the throne at age sixteen.

[99] Gertrude Emerson, *The Pageant of India's History*, Vol. I. p.236.

[100] So Emerson, *The Pageant of India's History*, Vol. I, p. 238-239.

wonder what form of strategic discourse the monk spoke to the emperor. What tack did he take? This cameo vividly portrays the superiority of the monk over the king, to whom no monk should ever bow; in addition this imaginative portrait dramatizes the close political proximity of Buddhism to the throne. Whatever Vasubandhu may have been dreaming about, this one thing is clear: he slept tight and comfortably within the Guptas' royal house. Vasubandhu was in the proverbial bed with kings when he wrote the *Vimsatika*, probably one of his final compositions.[101] Thus to read the *Vimsatika* in its courtly context is to read it with due suspicion. My suspicion is that the "dream metaphor" may be read, at least on one level, as a tongue-in-cheek parody of all those who are preoccupied with ritual and material objects. If we indulge further the historically novel hypothesis that Vasubandhu may have even written this work under the patronage of Samudra and for his instruction, we can see the *Vimsatika's* dream model as a drunk, clanging elephant paraded about by the clown, Vasubandhu. Its logic is so gangly, drunk, and staggering that none, even in his own tradition, could rescue the dream argument from its logical fallacies and lack of syllogistic symmetry. Though I make no pretense of building a thesis on unrecoverable dates and details, it bears consideration that Vasubandhu's so-called "dream metaphor" may have been at least an inadvertent occasion to chide the king. Consider the following: We know that Samudragupta performed the horse-sacrifice upon his return from conquering the four directions.[102] From the day the king sends the horse to traverse the newly appropriated domain, until a year later when the horse returns to be sacrificed, the king who will perform the sacrifice must refrain from sexual intercourse, while lying between the thighs of his favorite wife every night. The sexual abstinence, along with other austerities, was believed to help generate the internal ritual heat (*tapas*) which the king needed to perform

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[101] so Anacker, p.22.

[102] Emerson, p. 238-239.

the horse-sacrifice successfully.[103] It would be in keeping with our image of Vasubandhu as the court jester and clown if, when appealing to the case of nocturnal emissions as proof for the practical efficacy of actions performed in dreams, he had at least a peripheral view to critiquing the king's season of celibacy. The example could hardly have escaped the king's notice, particularly if pressed to Samudra's attention while he was awaiting the return of his tattered horse. Vasubandhu mocks the Vedic belief in rituals and invokes the common experience of wet dreams to expose the king's impotency in the face of the power of *middha* (the mind's enclosure in beginningless, habitual, obsessive and compulsive repressions). Even if the king has managed to restrain himself while lying awake between the thighs of his favorite wife, when he is overtaken by the drowsiness of sleep, he knows in the privacy of his dreams that he and his Vedic austerities are no match for the overwhelming power of sluggishness and sleep, and the incipient power of consciousness to enclose the mind in repressed impressions. In spite of the ascetic efforts of the king to generate the ritual power of heat in his own body, the repressed impressions will surface in the dreams of sleep and seduce the king to relinquish his power of self-control. Behold, not even the king is as sovereign as consciousness!

The influence, whether great or small, which Vasubandhu exerted on the royal Gupta court clearly did not inhibit the development and execution of their military genius. Upon ascending the throne of the Gupta Empire, Samudra immediately launched a military campaign of successful conquests in all four directions. In a very short period of time, Samudra extended his empire to rival that of Asoka in size. The implication is that the military enterprise of expansion was at least indirectly sanctioned and supported by Buddhism. The monk bosomed up to the king in order to ride the wave of political conquest, spreading the Dharma in the wake of devastation, destruction, and suffering.

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[103] see J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship From the Religious Point of View*, p.111 for details of the Horse Sacrifice.

The Buddhists' intention aside, the claim that Buddhism never propagated itself at the edge of the sword appears suspect, even if it was not their own sword. Samudra, like most of the Gupta kings, proclaimed himself a follower of Vishnu; nevertheless, his economic policy devoted nearly one-quarter of its revenue to the building and development of Buddhist religious and educational institutions.[104] He sponsored the construction of a Buddhist monastery near the cite of the Bodhi tree for the express purpose of providing shelter to the foreign, Sinhalese Buddhist monks making pilgrimage to the place of the Buddha's enlightenment.

As we have seen, philosophical debate in classical India was a major public event sponsored and promoted by the king, who also often served as the judge of the debate. Such debate was no mere idle pastime. The stakes for winners were high; the consequence for losers, dire. Victors often received large monetary rewards and political privilege. Fa Hsian records that Vasubandhu once received 300,000 gold pieces from the hand of Chandragupta II for defeating the Samkhyas in debate, and the chronicler does not fail to mention that Vasubandhu built three monasteries with the winnings.[105] Defeat entailed the losers' public recognition of the opponents' superiority, resulting in forced conversions, sometimes banishment, or even death in extreme cases. Vasubandhu's close alliance with the Guptas typifies Buddhism's missionary strategy , which appealed to the ruling elite. It is no wonder that Kumarila saw Buddhism as a threat to the established Hindu social order. Vasubandhu was a monk, renouncing the very world and social structure which Kumarila sought to uphold. Born of Brahmin descent the same year that his half brother, Asanga, became a Buddhist monk, Vasubandhu was probably trained in the Vedic tradition by his father, a Brahmin priest. At an early age Vasubandhu converted to the Buddhist Vaibhasika school. Later, influenced by his older brother, Asanga, Vasubandhu abandoned the complicated and elaborate metaphysics inherent in

[104] so Emerson, p. 236-237.

[105] see Anacker, p. 21.

Vaibhasika cosmology and embraced the Sautrantika tradition. Disenchanted with the Vaibhasikas' school yet still living among them, Vasubandhu did not openly announce his desertion from their sangha nor overtly repudiate any of their doctrines. Instead, he continued to teach others about the Vaibhasika system in the sangha each day, and at the end of each morning's lesson, Vasubandhu engraved a summary of the day's lesson on copper plates. When he had completed delivering the several month survey of their system, he garlanded an elephant with the numerous copper plates, made the elephant drunk, and paraded it clanging obnoxiously through the streets, imploring anyone who could refute the Vaibhasika's tenets to come forward and do so. Vasubandhu, as I see him, was a clown, a joker, the court jester. He was so clever that he managed to be in the Vaibhasika sangha without being of it. Vasubandhu was a trickster who fooled his audience of Vaibhasika monks by ridiculing the very doctrines they had appointed him to expound and defend. He had no qualms about deconstructing the very house in which he lived. Tradition relates another humorous incident about Vasubandhu that bears out our portrayal of him as "the Jokerman". While still a convinced Vaibhasika studying in Ghandara, Vasubandhu desired to travel to Kasmir to sit at the feet of the more eminent masters of Vaibhasika residing there. Fearing, as a foreigner, that he would not be permitted to cross the border, he feigned lunacy and presented himself as a crazed schizophrenic, raving and babbling incoherent and disconnected sentences like a madman. After a series of cross-examinations, the boarder guards were satisfied that Vasubandhu was certifiably insane. Indian culture, even now as well as in Vasubandhu's day, treats the mentally ill with deference, permitting them to wander about without restraint. Surveying the wealth of sources that chronicle Vasubandhu's career, Anacker has characterized Vasubandhu as the "Buddhist Psychological Doctor". From my examination of the same data, the emerging portrait of Vasubandhu more closely resembles a "mad-doctor" or "shock therapist" rather than a traditional psychiatrist or

psychotherapist. Vasubandhu was councilor to the emperor during his final years and lived in a private home under the emperor's patronage.[106] Tradition records that, at age eighty, Vasubandhu visited a monk named Handu who, though drunk, was carrying a huge jug of wine on his shoulders. At the sight of the drunk monk, Vasubandhu decried "The doctrine will go to ruin"; he then recited a sutra backwards after which recitation Handu dropped his jug and Vasubandhu dropped dead.[107] Not primarily a logician, but clearly a comedian to the very end, Vasubandhu's antics dramatize the inability of the old jug, i.e. the cracked and leaking cistern of formal syllogistic reasoning, to contain the new wine flowing forth from the stream of Vasubandhu's "consciousness-only".

Whereas Vasubandhu had formerly disregarded his brother Asanga's Yogacara teachings as impenetrable, upon converting to Mahayana Vasubandhu wanted to cut off his own tongue for ever having spoken despairingly of his brother's doctrine. How ironic that Vasubandhu condemns himself with the very same consequence prescribed by the Law of Manu for the low caste Sudra who recites the Veda though unauthorized to do so. Perhaps Vasubandhu chooses this punishment to deliberately parody the entire Vedic tradition; however I think the irony is more profound than facetious. Once again we see Vasubandhu the clown again, only this time he does not jest with a tradition whose house he has abandoned and declared empty; no, this time he laughs at himself, at his own feeble and pathetic attempts to explain the ineffable essencelessness. What Vasubandhu's half-brother had initiated, Vasubandhu made whole, developing a comprehensive vision of life for which consciousness is the thematic key.

3.2 Vasubandhu's Textual Tradition

Vasubandhu, no less than Kumarila, speaks in the name of a scriptural tradition, the *Prajnaparamita-sutras*. The earliest among these texts were probably composed in

[106] Hsuan-tsang, records, I, p. 325.

[107] Bu-ston, *Chos-'byung* II, p. 145.

the first century during the reign of Kanishka and form the scriptural foundation of Mahayana. There is little analogy which can be drawn between Kumarila's understanding of scripture as beginningless, authorless text and Vasubandhu's understanding of scripture as the works of human beings. Vasubandhu speaks in the name of *Tathagata*, the Buddha of the *Lotus Sutra*. Unlike Kumarila's belief in the authorless, infallible Veda, Vasubandhu's Mahayana tradition believes the *Prajnaparamita-sutras* are the work of a human being, however enlightened he may be. Kumarila, on the other hand, has a greater appreciation for the view of scripture canonized in the Pali sutras than he has for the view implicit in the *Prajnaparamita-sutras*. The Buddha of the Pali canon spoke words which preserved the reciprocity between speaker and speech act; there was no gap between what the Buddha meant and what he said. However in the *Lotus sutra*, *Tathagata* speaks words which are projections, and announces that the Pali Buddhists did not hear his words correctly. Mahayana sutras are not scriptural texts, according to Kumarila; instead they are only a "texture of truth in falsities."[108] Kumarila concluded his *"Niralambanavada"* by declaring that Vasubandhu misunderstood the words of the Buddha regarding the discourse on objects. On the relation of consciousness to objects Kumarila has said that consciousness is referential and does not lie. If one is conscious of an object, then the object exists. Otherwise, how could one be conscious of it? We do not perceive phantoms. He has accused Vasubandhu of lacking common sense as well as linguistic and epistemological rigor, and he charges Vasubandhu with undermining the meaning of life. It is in light of these charges that we present Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika*.

Just as Kumarila fights antagonists from both within and outside Hindu orthodoxy, Vasubandhu does battle on two fronts, one of which is of direct concern to us. He is fighting an in-house battle with other Buddhists, namely, Vaibhasika and

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[108] Bibhuti S. Yadav and William C. Allen, "Between Kumarila and Vasubandhu" Journal of Dharma, 1995.

Sarvastivadins. Regarding the ontological status of objects, Hinayana Buddhists are more kindred to Kumarila than to Vasubandhu. Vasubandhu is up against powerful textual and historical traditions which espouse the duality of *nama* and *rupa*, word and object, and truth and falsity. *Nama* is subjective, entailing the five sense experiences and the mind; *rupa* is objective, corresponding to the five sense fields of sense data. Vasubandhu makes a distinction between reality and existence, and between truth and presence. For example, in the illusion of mistaking a rope for a snake, the snake is present and actual to consciousness, but the snake is not real. Vasubandhu denies *rupa* reality, but does not deny *rupa* existence. Rather, he denies the external autonomy of *rupa*, but affirms its phenomenologically felt presence. It is the ontological autonomy that is denied to *rupa*, not existence.

This is the in-house problem Vasubandhu is fighting against with the Buddhism of the Pali canon. It is an exegetical problem. He must convince all Buddhists before him that they misunderstood the words of the Buddha. It is an interpretive issue concerning which words of the Buddha to take literally and which to take metaphorically or some other way.[109] Vasubandhu solves this with the doctrine of strategic discourse *(upaya)*. Buddhism has recognized a two-fold designation of the Buddha's teaching: literal *(nitartha)* and provisional *(neyartha)*.[110] *Neyartha* is understood within the tradition as a teaching that requires some non-literal interpretative exegesis. It literally signifies "to be led or driven to something else". The term entails the initial acceptance of a given point of view only to lead the holder of that point of view to something else.

There are three commonly recognized criteria which determine the provisional status of the Buddha's teachings or claims about the reality of objects *(rupa)*. The first

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[109] If not taken literally, the words of the Buddha are to be understood according to his strategic intentionality bearing in mind the context and dispositionality of his hearers.

[110] Yong Pyo Kim, *Hermeneutic of the Scriptural Word in the Prajna-Madhyamika System* , Ph.D. Dissertation, Temple University 1992, p. 103.

criterion is the intentionality *(adhyashaya)* of the Buddha himself. The second is the dispositionality of the listeners *(prayojana)*. The Buddha speaks to the condition and disposition of the listeners, whose viewpoint must be borne in mind while discerning the intended sense of the Buddha's words. The third criterion for determining the provisional status of the Buddha's teaching is scriptural and logical evidence *(pramana)*. Vasubandhu is answering charges of why the Buddha spoke of *rupa* if it is not real. Why did the Buddha say things about *rupa* when he did not mean his own assertions to be true?[111] What happened to the Buddha of the Pali canon who vows to mean what he says, and say what he means? Vasubandhu's answer anticipates the very same objection Kumarila raised several centuries later: If objects are not real, then the Buddha's teaching about them is not true.[112] Vasubandhu's answer is "efficient alienation".[113] There is a strategic alienation of the aim to lead to something else and a means, i.e. what is doing the leading. This alienation is two-fold; there is an enlightened alienation within the mind of the Buddha himself regarding his intention and the *rupa* teaching, his desire to speak the truth, and the inability of object-oriented language. Thus alienated, the Buddha must communicate truth through a language that is structured to do the contrary. Hence the efficacy of expedient device *(upaya)*. There is a second alienation that pertains to the medium and aim. The Buddha of Mahayana knows what he is using as a means is false, but is believed to be true by his listeners. They believe it is true because it has been taught by the Buddha before. The Buddha operates with what he knows is false -- the medium is false. The irony here is that the Buddha taught about objects *(rupa)* before. He spoke of objects *(rupa)* tactically, but "had something else in mind" -- namely, to lead people from this teaching to the idea that all is consciousness.[114] Consciousness

[111] *Vimsatika*, Commentary introducing v. 8.

[112] Ibid.

[113] *Vimsatika*, v. 8 and commentary.

[114] Ibid., commentary on v. 9.

differentiates itself as name and referent, subject and object. *Adhyashaya* is the intended sense in the mind of the Buddha, and *upaya* is his strategic discourse, the tactical stance the Buddha takes. So the *Tathagata* is one who excels in speech (*vadatam varam*), and Buddhists are those who believe they have heard the words of *Tathagata*. There is an efficient reciprocity between the two intentionalities, speaker and listener, but this reciprocity is false. The *Tathagata* speaks, making assertions that he himself knows are false, but the people trust his words. In this reciprocity there are two things which are uniquely Buddhist. First, if the speaker speaks and none listen, it is pointless. The Buddha does not speak to himself or for himself, but to and for others. Second, if people do not wish to move beyond where the Buddha wants to lead them, then there is no point in speaking to them. The Buddha must know who his listeners are before he can lead them to what and where he thinks they should be. His words are only a means to an end.

Given that this is the Buddha's intention, what is his mission (*prayojan*)? Given the intentional compulsion on the part of the speaker, the Buddha discourses with the Charvakins, Theravadins, and Hindus variously. The strategic intentionality differs depending on the disposition of the hearers. The Buddha's intention to use the listener's dispositionality remains the same, but its modality is different. The persistence of strategic intentionality and mission is the same, but his speech tactic (*upaya*) is different. The Buddha has a liberative mission to enter each and every house. He enters the various worlds of discourse, speaking the language of the house tactically and strategically, but his mission is the same. Each house is a projection of consciousness itself. The house is a manufactured entity, but its dwellers think it is more than that. They think it is a thing-in-itself. The house is empty by itself, but its inhabitants manufacture the house. They construct protective devices, boundaries, gates, and schemes of being and non-being. Their house plays magic on them. The mission of the Buddha entering the house in which eternal entities are discussed is to tactically and strategically lead the inhabitants of

the house to the realization that there are no things-in-themselves, that existence is without essence, and that there is an emptiness of eternal self, subject, and agent. But *Tathagata* speaks the language of things in-themselves, and *Tathagata* must speak the language of the house, the people. His intention is to speak the language of eternal entities in order to turn the inhabitants on to deconstruct the belief in defense of which the house speaks the language it does.

3.3 The Thematization of Consciousness

If objects have no ontological autonomy from consciousness, then what causes our illusion of objectivity? Vasubandhu answers this question in the *Vimsatika*, but he treats the theme more systematically and in greater detail in the *Trimsatika* which provides the answer with its doctrine of the three transformations of consciousness. In spite of its thoroughly detailed analysis of consciousness and the copious commentarial tradition, modern scholars of Yogacara have presented a confusing mass of models, diagrams, charts, analogies, and metaphors in their attempt to explain the transformations of consciousness to the "modern mind". Scholars have re-presented Yogacara's thematization of consciousness by likening it to such things as cinematography and holography. I do not want to add to the confusion with yet another "creative summary" of the turns of consciousness. Instead, I offer a brief recapitulation of the theory on its metaphorical terms without seeking a more space-age explanation. According to Vasubandhu's analysis, every volitional action produces an effect, technically called a *vasana*. These *vasanas* are "stored" as "seeds" (*bijas*) in the *alayavijnana* (storehouse consciousness) where they incubate until they mature and produce results. Coming to fruition, the seeds eventuate in touch, mental activity, feeling, perception, and will.[115] These characteristics of experience flow from the causal force exerted on *alaya* by the

[115] These are the psycho-physical components (skandas) constituting the Pali Buddhists' analytical assessment of the psychology of human nature.

seeds and constitute the first transformation of consciousness (*alayavijnana*). The second transformation occurs when ego-consciousness (*mano-vijnana*) evolves from the *alayavijnana* and gives birth to the false idea of a self which possesses consciousness. The third transformation of consciousness (*pravrittivijnana*) happens when the six-fold sense experiences give rise to various perceptions which are misinterpreted as subjectivity and objectivity. The consciousness associated with the six sense organs together with ego-consciousness, (*mano-vijnana*) comprise the emerging consciousness (*pravrtti-vijnana*).

The seed of consciousness which results in the perception of an object (*rupa*) over there in time and space the Buddha called *ayatan*. The perception of *rupa* is the perception of an external entity. This "apparently" external entity is an embodiment of the fruition of the seed in consciousness and the consciousness which so embodies itself because of its internal causative transformations. The seed consciousness, due to its internal causative transformation, and the emergent perception of *rupa*, the Buddha respectively called seed consciousness and *rupa* consciousness. The Buddha called both the eyes and the objects of sensory experience *ayatan*. External *ayatan* and internal *ayatan*, sense organ and object sensed, are expressions of the same seed. In the same way, all these appear external to consciousness because of the inner causative transformation of consciousness itself. There is a one-to-one correspondence between senses and sense objects, likewise there is correspondence between the act of seeding and materiality (*rupa*). There is a definite desire to see, which transforms itself into a definite sense organ and a corresponding visual object. Both sense organ and the object seen arise because of the arrival of consciousness through definite transformations into sense organ and corresponding sense object. As is the seed *(bija)* so is the appearance of the object *(rupapratibhasya)* that we see. There is correspondence between definite seeding and the appearance of an object (*rupapratibhasya).* As is the desire to see so is the sense object in correspondence with the organ; as is the desire to hear so is the sound

or word that we hear, etc. Skin and tactile object constitute a correspondence. There is always correspondence between the definiteness of sense organ and object. Driven by possessive desire, consciousness turns itself into an object. This desire accounts for all that makes us suffer, including sense organs, objects, and their respective fields of data.

The mission of critical thought is to construct a whole, coherent vision of the world. Because consciousness itself becomes sense organs and projects itself as representative sense objects,[116] Vasubandhu dismisses all non-Mahayana forms of Buddhism. The desire for objects and the belief that they are there form this two-fold foundation called *ayatan*. Indeed there is no single knowing subject, nor a single object to be known. There is no unitariness in the knower and the known object. Having realized this, those who are dispositionally ready to hear the discourse on essencelessness will enter the path of essencelessness. That is the mission *(prayojan)*.[117] How is this enlightenment accomplished? This consciousness emerges and appears as objects *(dharmas)* like color,·shape, taste, size, weight, sound, etc.. The realization of essencelessness *(dharma pravesh)* happens with the realization that there is no such object *(dharma)* having attributes like color, sound, taste, etc..[118] Object consciousness, which seeks transcendence, must itself be transcended.

Vasubandhu agrees that there are many modes of consciousness. *Parnispana* is consciousness without the passion for images and objects. To realize this consciousness is to be enlightened *(samhita-vijnana)*. *Paratantara* is consciousness living through objects and objectification. This is objective consciousness which entails karmic concurrence of more than one person, dependent origination, and causality. There is value in it, but it is not true. Consciousness becomes the slave of things it does not know it has created. *Parikalpita* is consciousness as a dream. The various modalities are

[116] *Vimsatika*, commentary on v. 9.

[117] Ibid., commentary on v. 10a.

[118] Ibid., commentary on v. 10b.

different but the principle remains the same. How consciousness does things remains the same, but what it does in the process is different. Yet there is another kind of enlightenment, namely, the knowledge of the modality of consciousness in the world. In the Buddhas there is an awareness of this duality of objects and the possessiveness of them. Life is a stage of consciousness on which it plays its magic. The Buddhas' awareness of duality as false frees them from attachment. The cognitive awareness of duality is there, but the existential attachment (commitment) to "I", "my", etc. is not there. Consciousness has transformed itself into the world. The agent of salvation cannot be different from the agent of suffering.

3.4 Critique of Ontology

What is the purpose of denying entitativeness and substantiality to objects *(dharmas)*?[119] Vasubandhu's answer is simple: to reflect on how consciousness comes to have objects. According to the doctrine of dependent origination, a thing comes to be and ceases to be, and what ceases to be may come to be again. There is no ceiling. Whereas Kumarila accuses Vasubandhu of stealing objects, Vasubandhu is interested in how consciousness assumes sovereignty and ownership of objects. He examines how objects come to be and what role consciousness plays in bringing objects into being and then erasing them or not from its horizon. Consciousness is primary; it acquires objects and then loses them in its own interests: consumption. The Buddha speaks in a disguised form concerning the doctrine of dependent origination. A thing is not a given. An object is equal to how it comes to be. It has a history. It depends on something else; it is not autonomous, not a thing in itself, over there, about which we can say it is or is not. The premise of either/or logic is that a thing is given; it is the ontological status quo. Vasubandhu asserts that experience shows things are not just there; they come to be

[119] Ibid., commentary introducing v. 10.

there. He demonstrates the reasonability of questioning this assumption without doing violence to common sense.

The realization of the essencelessness of objects *(dharmas)* does not entail the idea that all *dharmas* whatsoever and howsoever are non-existent. Rather, they are cases of *kalpita*, imaginatively placed over there in time and space. Vasubandhu has clearly equated those who believe in external objects *(Byarthavadins)* with unreflective people. What do unreflective people do? They follow the innate propensity in consciousness to manufacture, project, and place its own manufactured thing in space and time; they create externality. Early Buddhism understood that there is no entity like *Atman*, but they did not extend the same argument to conclude, as Vasubandhu did, that the momentary *dharmas* are non-being. Vasubandhu's use of "non-being" in reference to objects *(dharmas)* was misunderstood by his fellow Buddhists as well as by Kumarila. They falsely equated non-being *(nasti)* with being there, but not there independent of consciousness *(nairatmya)*. *Parikalpita* is the imaginatively constructed duality that Vasubandhu says is *nairatmya*, not *nasti*. Vasubandhu spoke of all external objects as not independent of consciousness *(nairatmya)*. Just as Buddha had offered a strategic deconstruction of *Atman*, in the same way he deconstructed external entities *(rupa)*. Things apart from consciousness are empty. The knowing subject apart from consciousness is disguised; it is an illusion. Consciousness is like a magician doing magic. By the same token, Vasubandhu does not mean to say there is non-being of the self, *Atman*. The *Atman* simply does not exist apart from the manufacturing and constructing propensities of consciousness. Instead, he is subjecting epistemology and ontology to the history of consciousness. How do we come to know the things that we know? Meditation and reflection are required to arrive at these conclusions. Knowledge is a reflectively arrived at experience. Thus the need for yoga meditation.

What is the source of visible forms -- consciousness or objects? Consciousness is always consciousness <u>of</u> an object. For Kumarila, weight is on the side of the object.

The flow of cognitive movement is from the outside, from the external object. If one denies what consciousness is aware of, one necessarily denies consciousness itself. If there is no object, there can be no consciousness. On the other hand, Vasubandhu says: If there is no consciousness, there can be no object. The knower and the known, the appropriating subject and the appropriated object, together comprise a duality which is actually imagined but taken to be real by non-reflective people. This imagined duality which is believed to be true and therefore is valued by epistemologists and other unreflective people is called *dharmanairtmya*. It is so designated because they do not have subject-object polarity, but not because the objects *(dharmas)* do not exist.[120] Vasubandhu is not denying the existence of objects, but their attributes are not there apart from the subject-object consciousness that projects them; both are constructions *(nirmita)*. The controversy here concerns the function of two words in the discourse: imagination *(kalpita)*, and cognition *(pramitti)*. Cognition is an expression of imagination, a trick of consciousness. Cognitions happen in the history of consciousness, i.e. in our imagination. In fact, cognitions are an implied form of imagination. The properties of *dharma* do not belong to *dharma*, but they do belong to the consciousness which projects them. Consciousness concretizes this imagined attribute and thing. There is a duality of seer and seen, eyes and the seen object. When the eyes see blue, what is the locus of the blueness? Does it belong to a *dharma* outside of consciousness, or does it belong to consciousness which projects this kind of *dharma* and its attributes? Early Buddhists had said that momentariness is a property which belongs to moments, just as blueness is a property belonging to objects. Vasubandhu questions the ontological autonomy of the attributes and properties that consciousness associates with external objects. He is not denying that they are there; he is simply saying that they are not there on their own apart from consciousness. He denies the externality of things. What does this ultimately tell us? That there is no thing in itself, either spiritual or material, no

[120] Thomas Kochumuttom, *A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience*, pp. 170-174.

Atman, no *vastu*. There are no things in themselves, internal or external. Things do not have attributes. There are no ontological properties of entities by themselves. They are all projected or imagined *(vikalpa)*. There is no autonomy of knowing subject. There is no performative subject in itself, and no thing in itself with which we do things.

The implications of Vasubandhu's position caused his fellow Buddhists and Kumarila to raise the same objection: If all *dharmas* are non-being, then is consciousness- only also non-being?[121] The unreflective consciousness dualizes without knowing that the so-called objects are not ontological but an act of self- differentiating consciousness. How do the knower and known come to be? They are instantiations of the self-differentiating consciousness. Vasubandhu does not deny their existence -- he merely denies their autonomy from consciousness. The issue here is the duality *(grahagra)* of subject-object.[122] Kumarila says that both are real entities existing on their own. Epistemology, especially perception and inference, operates within this duality. Without duality there can be no epistemology.[123] Ontology is the epistemic status quo.

3.5 Critique of Epistemology

Especially for Dharmakirti and Kamasila, epistemology is the means to attain enlightenment. Thinking is an instrument used to realize enlightenment *(sadahana)*. The knowing subject and the known object are instruments of thinking. According to Vasubandhu, however, philosophy does not give liberation but bondage. The Buddha did not teach the truth of being and non-being. How we know and what we know are the result of anguish and suffering caused by obsessive compulsions *klesha*. Vasubandhu

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[121] *Vimsatika.*, commentary on 10b.

[122] Ibid., commentary on 10c.

[123] J.N. Mohanty, "*Pramana and Prameya*", Philosophy East and West, Vol. 38, no. 3 (July 1988).

wants to transcend how we know and what we know because both are works of imagination.

Kumarila has done epistemology for one purpose -- namely, to make rational decisions about whether to take things or leave them. We engage in actions to acquire the things we desire most. Once we learn things and know them correctly, we have a basis on which to decide whether they are good or not, and whether or not they serve human interests. Vasubandhu argues against this saying that if human consciousness does not desire things, there is no point in doing epistemology. It is because consciousness desires objects that they are there and there is the need to know them. In a similar vein, it is because consciousness does not like certain objects that it needs to reject them. There is a desire behind the cogito. The *vasana* is already present in the need to do epistemology *(pramana)*. The acquisitive consciousness is already presupposed in the need to do epistemology. Objects happen to consciousness. Consciousness seeks objects. The knowable object is a desired object; *Prameya* is *visaya*. The object is known because it is desired or not desired. Epistemology is not done without a reason; it is done as a means to fulfill human interests. Thus there is no detached interest in doing epistemology.

Vasubandhu asserts that cognitions always happen in the background of actions. *Samskaras* precede past actions, and the need to know, and knowledge itself. *Samskaras* determine the need for the awareness of the object to be known, and the knowledge through which to know the object, and the subject that knows it. The cognitive to be known is not a given. The epistemic trinity of a cognitive act includes the object, the subject, and the act of knowing. Vasubandhu says an epistemic cognitive situation is not a given out there, nor does it occur in a vacuum; it is acquired. Vasubandhu is interested in the causes and conditions through which consciousness assumes epistemic texture. There is a discernible psycho-history of consciousness. Psycho-rational consciousness happens to consciousness which appears rational but is actually an expression of a deeper

consciousness; this deeper consciousness, in contrast, is not rational but appetitive, possessive, erotic, and appropriative. It is a whirlwind like waves of the ocean.[124] Hence, Vasubandhu calls into question the epistemological methodology by which the nature of consciousness and objects have been investigated and analyzed by his predecessors.

Epistemology is based on contact of sense organs and objects. For Kumarila, the following things must be said about the contact in order for it to entail valid perception.[125] In the situation of contact there is a sense of definiteness. We see a particular thing, not just anything at all. It must be vivid and clear, not ambiguous or doubtful. Sense contact cannot occur with something past or future; It must be immediate. The object should be given here and now, not there and then. Following the valid cognition, successful activities are performed. It is indubitable and gives us certainty. This certainty is the reason for successful activity. Without *pramanas* we cannot say whether something is there or not there. It is because of these properties in the contact that sense perception, *(pratyaksa)* is a superior *(gristan)*, foundational source of knowledge. Sense perception is *pramana*; we use it to determine whether a particular entity is there or not. If there is no means of knowing, then there is no telling what is there and what is not, and, thus, no action results; no *pramana*, no *prameya*. Humans are not inclined to do things that are ambiguous or doubtful. Rational decisions presuppose the definite existence, or not, of things, and that in turn is determined by *pramanas*, especially by sense perception.

Vasubandhu phenomenalizes epistemology by offering a reinterpretation of the nature of sense-object contact. Vasubandhu's unique understanding of contact distinguishes him from everyone else. He aptly explains the notion of contact between sense organs and objects without postulating the externality of objects. How does this contact occur? It occurs the same way when awake as it does in dreams. The subtle but distinguishing point at which Vasubandhu parts company with his predecessors and

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[124] *Trimsatika*, v. 4.

[125] see G.P. Bhatt, *The Basic Ways of Knowing*, p. 72-74.

contemporaries is the reality of contact and the reality of the object with which one comes into contact. The entire meditation tradition of Vasubandhu is rooted in the problem of contact. Contact is not an innocent thing; the sense organs do not passively come into contact with what is there. There is a history of consciousness (*karma-klesh*) that accounts for why we perceive things as we do. Vasubandhu's position is that speakability, and knowability, and the suffering they entail are properties of the knowing consciousness, not of objects.

For Kumarila, the autonomy of objects is rooted in the notion of contact. If contact is lost, then the whole world is lost. Vasubandhu believes he can keep the contact without losing the world. There is evidence of sensory perception without objects, just as there is evidence of contact between sense organs and objects that are not really there. In the moment of contact there is a feeling of definiteness, vividness, non-erroneousness, indubitability, and immediacy, yet there is no real object. Vasubandhu questions the very notion of contact. He does not deny contact; rather he questions the realist's understanding of what contact entails. He questions the givenness, presence, and immediacy of the contact. In contact there is the idea of sensory limit (*alambana)*. What constitutes the sensory limit if the object is not present? It is the idea, not the alleged object, that accounts for the sensory limit. The moment I see this, the visual sensation and the object are gone. So what accounts for the sensory limit is ideation of consciousness, not a sense of consciousness. That being the case, how can there be an object?[126] This is Vasubandhu's critique of the view which regards contact as compresence or co-occurrence in time and space of sense organs and sense objects. Is the moment of sense object contact the same as the moment of saying "I see this"? Vasubandhu answers with an emphatic no! "I see or hear or smell this" is a recognitive type of experience. It is recognition of sense organs with contact. It is not a perceptual

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[126] *Vimsatika*, commentary on v. 16b.

awareness with immediacy or concurrence of the sense organ and object; it is a recollection of contact between sense organs and their objects. In the moment there is awareness of sensory perception (*budddhi-pratyaksa*), there is no sensory experience, no sensory data, and no sense contact.

The controversy hinges on the relation between sensory experience (*samvedana*) and awareness of sensory experience (*svasamvedana*). For Kumarila it is because of sensory experience (*samvedana*) that awareness of sensory experience (*svasamvedana*) occurs; whereas for Vasubandhu it is the other way around.[127] Vasubandhu retains the moment of contact as apparently definite, indubitable, immediate, non-erroneous, etc., but these characteristics of contact are actually erroneous. According to Vasubandhu there are no objects independent of consciousness. It follows that if objects are not independent of consciousness, then in the very act of being conscious of itself, consciousness would know the object. This is precisely Vasubandhu's point. The consciousness, in the moment of self-consciousness, is also aware of the object. This is a meditative insight. There is a difference between consciousness and reflective consciousness, between *samvedana* and *svasamvedana*. Vasubandhu directs our consideration to the examination of consciousness which becomes self-consciousness. Epistemology happens to self-consciousness. An unconscious being does not do epistemology. Vasubandhu is interested in the examination of the difference between consciousness and self-consciousness. His point is to show that epistemology is an act of the imagination. The epistemic sense of awareness happens to consciousness. There are identifiable causes and conditions which account for why this happens to consciousness. Consciousness does not simply come to be self-conscious for no reason; the reasons are to be found in consciousness itself.

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[127] Ibid., v. 17b.

There are two kinds of perception: *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa*, with and without the imposition of imagination or linguistic constructs respectively.[128] X is pure moment, pure sense data about which one cannot say "I see it" because the moment we say it, it is not there; it is already past. The sense data *(ayatan)*, just is. We cannot attribute properties to it like red, etc., because the moment I say "It is red" the property red has already been constructed. There is a difference between something being there and saying it is there. Saying it is there is not perception. The past cannot be called present, and the present object has no time to be present. Sensory perception is not *samvedana*; it is *svasamvedana*. Awareness of sensory perception occurs first and then sensory perception happens. Even regarding speakable objects, "I see the blue object there", the moment we associate words with what we see, we are universalizing a particular. Words do not refer to sense data *(ayatan)* over there. Words refer to objects which consciousness has conceived in the past and returned to the present. The referent of language is always constructed by *klesh*. In the statement "This is blue", blue is not there; it is past. Just as the object is momentary, so also is the subject. By the time the subject says "I see this", the subject is gone. The knowing subject is a conscious agent. It has aims; it knows where it is and where it wants to go. The agent is enclosed in consciousness already. It is not that the self has consciousness -- this notion is false. The truth is that consciousness comes to assume the form of a self.

Thus Vasubandhu rejects the notion of the knowing subject. But what does Vasubandhu say about the relation of the knowing subject and the reflective knowledge that is in the reflective consciousness? What about this duality? Is the cogito that knows another cogito a case of one cognition being a cognition of another? The meditative situation of the knowing cogito *(pramiti)* and the known cogito is immediate awareness and non-dualistic intuitive reflection.[129] Regarding the sensory limit *(alambana)*, if the

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[128] see B. K. Matilal, Perception p. 312-313.

[129] *Vimsatika*, comment on v. 10c.

so-called object in sensory perception is not there, then what is present? Vasubandhu takes recourse to the notion of appearance *(pratibhasa).* The so-called objects are counter- present to the mind which means the mind remembers without knowing that it is doing so. What is the cognitive status of memory? Is it truth or imagination? According to Vasubandhu memory is presupposed in perception. He accepts that contact occurs, but not contact of the object present; rather, our impression (*vasana*) of a past experience is transferred into the present. Vasubandhu does not question the moment of contact; rather, he questions the presentness of the object *(ayatan)* because what is perceived is past. The mind is what recalls an object of the past. Even though the object seems to be present, it is erroneously perceived to be there. Kumarila says that without experience, there can be no memory. Vasubandhu says the opposite -- without memory, there can be no sense perception. The question is -- can there be memory without an actual perceptual experience and perceptual objects in the past? And what is the object of memory? Kumarila and early Buddhism both maintained that memory is impossible without objects in the past. But, while it is true that there can be no memory without objects in the past, what constitutes this "pastness"? Does it have to do with objects or with a past experience of objects? His position is that consciousness creates its own objects, so memory hinges on one's experience of supposed objects. In all episodes of memory there are *vasanas*. Bodhisattvas live life knowing that objects are illusions.

According to Vasubandhu's assessment, different systems of thought are rationalizations of what is real. They all formalize and rationalize the passions of consciousness. Consciousness assumes a cognitive or epistemic posture only to formalize and rationalize and theorize what it has created out of passions. It is interested in world- ordering *(visayavyastha)* which it does through epistemology. How does consciousness decide what is truly there and what is not? It has the means to order the world and uses that means to do so. Vasubandhu wants to overcome what consciousness

has accomplished through its own work. Consciousness is intentional and wants to overcome the world over there in time and space. Consciousness is driven to imagine a world of objects in order to overcome the very world which it imagines.

3.6 Dreams, Ghosts, Hell, and Other Examples

It is fortunate for Vasubandhu that he did not try to defend his dream analogy by means of epistemology. Kumarila has conclusively demonstrated that it cannot be defended inferentially. Vasubandhu, as we have seen, is not as interested in doing epistemology as he is in critiquing it. Vasubandhu's response entails a methodological shift from doing epistemology to psychologizing epistemology and ontology.

By means of the dream paradigm, Vasubandhu answers three stock objections raised by realists. The objections concern determination in time and space and the performance of meaningful activities, (*krita-kriya)*.[130] Vasubandhus opponents objected that if there are no objects autonomous from consciousness, then why do we see a particular thing at a given place and not all places, and why do we see it at one time and not all times. Vasubandhu's answer is clever. Even in dreams there is a temporal and spatial sequence. It is evident that the determination, i.e. definiteness, of cognition regarding time and space is like a dream.[131] How so? Let Vasubandhu "explain". In our dreams we see butterflies, gardens, men, women, etc., at a given place, but not everywhere. Although such objects are not real, they are seen at some places and not others. Furthermore, in places where objects are seen, one cannot see them all the time -- only sometimes. Thus it is evident that even without real objects, there is a definite experience of an object in time and space.[132] Unconvinced, the opponent presses him further. Why don't we do meaningful activities (*arthakriya)* with these objects? Why

[130] Ibid., v. 2 and commentary.

[131] *Vimsatika*, v. 3.

[132] Ibid., v. 2 and commentary.

don't we engage in the same successful activities as we do with normally seen objects? For example, if we eat and drink in our dreams, why aren't we nourished and satiated as a result? If we were in an imagined or fantasized city, like Gandhabava, we do not do urban activities as we would in Varanasi.[133]

Vasubandhu explains that meaningful activities are possible with objects which are not there. Meaningful activities are known to be caused by dream objects. He mimics and mocks his opponent's use of reason by saying: "It is not reasonable to say that the above mentioned activities such as eating and drinking, do not happen if the objects are not real because...." [134] As various purposes are served in a dream when it is obstructed by means of non-existent objects, so also in the waking state, one's purpose is served by means of non-existing things. Just as in wet dreams of men, without actual physical contact, there is discharge of semen; in the same way meaningful activities are performed with objects seen in perceptual anomaly [or in waking state].[135]

To answer a remaining objection Vasubandhu takes his argument to the realm of hell. The objection concerns the fact that dream objects and optical disorders appear in only one person's mental stream and not to everyone. He has been accused of a category mistake in his example, confusing a private experience with a public one.[136] Vasubandhu responds that object experience is possible because of mental streams *(samtanya)*, which he compares to departed souls, *(pretas)*. We can speak of and account for experiences of objects even though they are not given at a specific time and place like the experiences of departed souls. It is evident that all departed souls experience a river of puss. Not only one departed soul sees the puss river; all of them see the river full of

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[133] Ibid., commentary on v. 2.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., v. 4a and commentary.

[136] Ibid., commentary on v. 2.

puss because of the sameness of karmic impressions. Just as all see the river of puss, so also they see the river filled with urine, swords, sticks, etc., in the river.[137] Thus, the objectivity of a public experience is proved even in the absence of real objects. The departed soul is used as the example here. The objectivity of object experience concerns the similarities of cognitions rather than the common objectivity of the river. The similarity of cognitions is based on a similarity of impressions, not objects. The point is that, at a given time and place, a certain non-existent entity is perceived because a particular class of beings, in this case departed souls, come to have a given similarity of impressions (*karma*) and are driven by a certain sameness of impressions.

People are taught to believe in a torturing experience of hell even though such instruments of torture are not there. The belief that they are there is more important than their actually being there. The belief makes us see certain things and act a certain way. Vasubandhu avoids metaphysical being or non-being in favor of the believed presence of a definite thing in time and space. Constant obsession (*raga)* with certain things makes us perceive these things even though they are not there. Habit formation determines what we will see. What is consciousness conscious of? It has nothing to do with the independent giveness of objects of consciousness. To the question "what is consciousness conscious of ?", Vasubandhu says it is a misleading and secondary question because it assumes that consciousness is one thing and the object another kind of thing, and both are given and form a relation. But how does consciousness come to know what it knows? How do several people become aware of the same thing? People believe that a certain thing is there because of the psycho-history of consciousness. One such important belief is a hell with a definite, and vivid description. Kumarila says definiteness depends on the certainty of objects that are there, but Vasubandu shows that definiteness exists in dreams and hell. If a person is bad, he sees bad things. Thus human consciousness is bound by itself.

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[137] Ibid., v. 3b and commentary.

If the Yogacarins' position is true, namely, that consciousness, driven by its own *vasanas*, transforms and projects itself into outside objects, and that the awareness and subsequent idea of objects is caused by such projections, then Kumarila and Sautrantikas have the following objections. Because of activities like the hearing of true and false words on the discourse of objects *(dharmas)* and consciousness (*vijnapti*), how can the idea of true and false words arise in the absence of real, actual, existing, true and false words? How is the hearing of the words of the Buddha possible if there are no independent words and no speaker of the words? Experience shows that by coming into contact with real, actually existing, good and bad friends, we become good and bad respectively. If such persons are not there independently, then how do you account for this causal efficacy relation? By hearing good and evil words, we have the idea of doing good or evil. If there are no words and no good or evil persons independent of consciousness, then how is doing good things in the presence of good people and evil things in the presence of bad people possible? Vasubandhu offers a courageous response to these objections: All this is possible because of the mutuality of the power of one mental stream (*vijnapti)* over another, not because of external objects. Whereas Vasubandu had been speaking of the relation of consciousness to objects, here the discussion shifts to the relation between persons and persons. Regarding the other person, the point is the contact between a person who does good things and another person in whose presence the good things are done. What is this contact between and what does it mediate? The contact is the mutuality between two streams of consciousness. The contact here implies appropriate compresence and concurrence between two streams of consciousness. The mutual affectability has nothing to do with real objects or persons over there. The contact has to do with the mutuality of the desire in one stream of consciousness to speak certain words, either true or false, and the desire in another mental stream to hear true or false words and do good or evil things. What is

important is not the movement of the lips or even the words themselves, but the desire to speak and the desire to hear. These are the things that account for the mutuality which is the basis for moral life. Regarding the conditions of a moral life, the following objections remain: if waking consciousness were mere consciousness without any external object, like in a dream, then why is it that there is no similarity in the beneficent or malevolent results of actions done in the waking and dreaming world? If experience and deeds happen without external objects, then why don't charitable deeds done in dreams and the same deeds done in the waking world have similar effects? Why is it that evil deeds, like killing, do not have similar effects in waking and dreaming life?[138] Vasubandhu says there is dissimilarity of results because in dreams the mind is enclosed in, replete with, overtaken by, and killed by suppressed and repressed impressions *(middha).*[139] A mind is driven by desires which are themselves constructed by repressed impressions. This is the reason why fruits of action performed in waking and dreaming states are dissimilar; the reality of external objects is not the decisive factor. *Middha* is a mental state which is neither good nor evil in itself; rather, it becomes good with other people's *middha*. Mutuality entails certain mental activities, forces in our mind, that become good or bad with other good or bad persons who say or do good or bad things in our presence.

If this difference between speaker and hearer and fruits of actions is mere consciousness, having nothing whatsoever to do with the external body and words of any real person, then how does the death of a sheep occur in the process of being killed by a butcher? If the death of the sheep is not caused by the butcher, how do they acquire the name butchers or murderers? If all is consciousness only, and there are no real beings with real bodies and real words, then why are some people known as murderers and

[138] Ibid., v. 18.

[139] *Trimsatika*, *Middha* is the mind's enclosure in repressed impressions, one of the 52 *chaitaikas*, mental states.

butchers, and why are there entities like sheep being killed? What is the condition of being killed? The condition of being killed requires real beings with real bodies and real words. If there is no real body, there is no killer and nothing killed. There will be none to order the killing, and none to execute the command. Without real bodies, one can kill or be killed merely by wishing. Without physical, delimiting constraints, anything is possible to or through any being. What is the real significance of living? What is born and what dies? The issue concerns the reality of relations between two or more real entities. All human, moral, and religious transactions are possible because of the reality of persons in a relation of compresence. Vasubandhu says the contact is conceived and constituted by consciousness only. The relation is consciousness only; the persons are consciousness only. This is his answer to the question of death and the culpability of the killer. The example which Vasubandhu provides is drawn from the popular belief that there are ghosts *(pisaca)* in the trees, and there is a loss of memory if there is contact between a person and a ghost in the tree. In the same way, Vasubandhu argues that sheep die because of the power of other minds *(manovisartha)*, an activity which is caused by another person's desires. He invokes two more examples from Indian mythology, illustrating that death occurs to people as a result of the power of other minds, especially the power of the mind to punish *(mano danda)*. What is the meaning of death if there is no real body? What is the meaning of words if there are no real words? Death has nothing to do with activities like seizing a weapon and using it on the sheep's body; rather, death and murder are a result of the desire to kill an object. And what is this object? It is actually an embodiment in space of our likings, needs, aversions, etc.. The butcher does not kill everything, only a particular thing, e.g., sheep. What motivates the butcher to pick up the weapon and kill the sheep is the need and desire to do so. This sheep is an externalization of appetitiveness *(vasana)*, the image the butcher has of the object. The subjects that grasp the weapon to kill are not objects. Polar dualities do not really exist only differentiations of consciousness.

Moral accountability is based on the idea that there is a responsible subject. What are the conditions under which sin or crime are possible? Consciousness bifurcates itself into subject and object, and then sheep are killed. The butcher kills because of the power of his mind. Death is a disruption of a person's mental stream; it occurs because another person seizes a weapon and decides to use it. A person is killed because he comes into contact with another person. Events occur because of the volitionality between minds. Death entails an awareness of dying. There is an interruption of the mental stream, and this discontinuity or disruption is death. Killing only makes sense because of the notion of the subject that does it. Morality and culpability presuppose the idea of an agent, which is the activity of consciousness itself. This agent does something, not to a thing, but to an object which is a symbol of hatred (e.g. killing) or love (e.g. giving support), etc.. The subject reduces other things to objects. An object is consequent upon the desire to love or hate, and this desire bonds the person who loves or hates to the loved or hated person. The subject is the one who is morally culpable or praiseworthy. Without the subject there are no good or bad deeds. Vasubandhu thinks he can dispense with the subject without sacrificing morality, since agency is constituted by consciousness, not by things. What must be presupposed in order for morality to be possible? Mechanical, physical violence in itself is not evil. The verbal and physical acts of violence are immoral only if there is an intention to do violence. Any act by itself is not ethical or unethical; neither is the consequence following from the act. What makes it right or wrong are premeditated decisions. Why are we angry? Why do we hate? We are angry or hateful due to habit formations, the patterns of intentions and desires that constitute our personalities.

Vasubandhu makes an ironic appeal to the Buddha's remarks proving the efficacy of the power of one mind over another. He poses a counter-question: If you do not agree with me that death is the result of the power of another person's mind, how else do you explain that a forest like Kandakamya was emptied of people because of the anger of

risis? The Buddha had alluded to the popular myth in order to demonstrate that, of all the bad activities, mental activities are the worst. There are three types of mental activity which can be good or evil. *Kaya-danda* is physical evil manifesting itself in torturing and killing. *Vaca-danda* is verbal violence, and *mano-danda* is mental, intentional evil. This third evil, *mano-danda*, is designated by the Buddha as the worst of all. This mental punishment in conjunction with the desire to do harm is possible only if the conditions for physical and verbal harm are absent.

3.7 The Strategy and Aim of Vasubandhu's Text

I place the discussion on the plan of Vasubandhu's text as a postscript to this chapter because I only discerned a tenable hypothesis post-factum to my translation work. I position what should be first -- last -- because I think that Vasubandhu's text, like the sutra he recited with his dying breath -- is backwards. I mean that figuratively and not formally. I do not suggest that the *Vimsatika* reverses a well established structural pattern in the *shastra* as genre, but I do believe the text turns the entire discourse on objects upside down and backwards. The backwardness of the *Vimsatika* is not a regressive backwardness; it is a radical and revolutionary way to think and look at things from inside- out, and not from outside-in.

John Tabor thinks that Vasubandhu's so-called "dream analogy" was too obviously flawed to have ever been intended by Vasubandhu as a logically defensible proposition.[140] Nevertheless, Chandrakirti, Kumarila, Shankara and others even today continue to critique Vasubandhu's "dream metaphor" as if it were posited as a formal example *(dristanta)* by Vasubandhu. Dignaga and Dharmakirti, and even Shankara employed the "dream analogy" to explain their respective theories of consciousness, yet no major Buddhist philosopher following Vasubandhu ever undertook a defense of

[140] John Tabor, "Kumarila's Critique of the Dreaming Argument" in *Studies in Mimamsa*, R.C. Dwivedi.

consciousness-only *(Vijnaptimatrata)* based on the "dreaming argument". It was so logically indefensible that Dignaga and Dharmakirti abandoned all attempts to justify it and developed an epistemological defense of "consciousness-only" by critiquing the constructed relation between subject and object. In view of the obvious flaws in Vasubandhu's "dreaming argument" the reader is faced with two options. The first option is to flatly admit that Vasubandhu's auto-commentary on the *Vimsatika* was weak, and that Vasubandhu was simply not good at expounding and clarifying the twenty-odd verses of his text. The auto-commentary, accompanying the *Vimsatika*, adds no luster to the text; it merely repeats, often verbatim, the words composed in the verses. His redundancy appears to have no heuristic value; the monotony of his commentary seems to reflect dull, bored students who were more interested in mindless memorization than in exploring the depth of Vasubandhu's thought, if, indeed, there is anything profound to fathom in the text. By any reckoning, Vasubandhu's auto-commentary on the *Vimsatika* is the poorest commentary in Sanskrit literature. A prose commentary should explain, expound, amplify, elucidate, explicate, illustrate, and unpack the arguments in the verse-text. Vasubandhu's commentary has its moments -- flashes of brilliance -- but overall, to any reader from within the Sanskrit commentorial tradition, it is mediocre. We don't expect mediocrity from an author of Vasubandhu's stature, so the readers' only other option is to consider that Vasubandhu is doing something so clever and subtle that most readers miss his strategy and consequently the message of the text. I believe that Vasubandhu had "something else in mind" which has eluded and continues to elude readers of the *Vimsatika*. Most scholars suggest that the *Vimsatika* was written in tandem with the *Trimsatika*, and that a clear understanding of the latter is prerequisite and indispensable to an intelligent reading of the former. There can be no question that the *Trimsatika* is a systematic treatment of Vasubandhu's psychology of consciousness. It delineates the three transformations of consciousness and explains things that are only alluded to in the *Vimsatika*. Nevertheless, I suggest that the *Vimsatika* is not so

dependent on the *Trimsatika* that it cannot be read as an independent work. The *Vimsatika* is not merely an amplification of the *Trimsatika*; it has a plan and theme of its own. By assuming that the *Vimsatika* is a companion volume to the *Trimsatika* and is best understood in its relation to the latter, the uniqueness and novelty of the *Vimsatika* may continue to elude even the best of exegetes. The time has arrived to take a new look and consider a radically different approach to interpret the mind of the monk and to discern the intention behind his enigmatic images and illustrations. I invite scholars to entertain the plausibility that Vasubandhu is doing something unprecedented in the Sanskrit *shastra* genre. My hypothesis is that the *Vimsatika* mocks, mimes, and mimics the *shastra* as genre. For most Sanskrit philosophers, *shastra* is an instrumental means leading to salvation; but for Vasubandhu *shastra* does not give liberation but bondage. I contend that Vasubandhu could not have been unaware of the inadequacy and indefensibility of his "dreaming argument" in defense of "consciousness-only". The analogy from dream is so logically ludicrous that some Sanskrit scholars have gone so far as to say that Vasubandhu no longer believed in the "mind-only" doctrine when he was commissioned to compose the *Vimsatika*. According to this view, Vasubandhu purposely presented a weak argument because he was more interested in overturning the doctrine than promoting it. I doubt that, but at least this "thesis of sabotage" demonstrates that Vasubandhu's sub-standard use of logic has driven Sanskrit scholars to account for Vasubandhu's textual tactics in some other way than the first option, i.e. that he was simply weak in formulating, developing, articulating, and defending a logical proposition. After all, Vasubandhu had written a treatise on how to do formal debate.[141] Though the "sabotage-theory" sounds far-fetched, there are good reasons for holding it. There is precedent in Vasubandhu's career of this "sabotaging strategy". One need only recall that Vasubandhu had taken this very tack while living within the Vaibhasika sangha. Vasubandhu's "drunk-elephant text" should give us a clue that the monk may be

[141] See Vasubandhu's *Vadavidhi.*

monkeying around. If we grant Vasubandhu the benefit of doubt regarding the intention of his "funny-business", we may conjecture that he had faith in humor and in a human beings' ability to laugh at their own folly -- provided they can recognize their foolishness in a non-threatening way. There is no telling whether or not any Vaibhasika monks caught Vasubandhu's humor, or whether the "drunk-elephant text" was a catalyst for any conversions. But the whole episode, at least tentatively, lends tenability to the hypothesis that Vasubandhu may have been doing something similar, though not exactly the same, in his *Vimsatika* and auto-commentary. Without going so far as viewing Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika* as a mockery of his own Yogacara Buddhism, we may still detect that the humor and zaniness of the text is directed at the entire Sanskrit *shastra* tradition. We have seen that discerning and defending the author's intention is an important feature of *shastra* discourse. Kumarila accused Vasubandhu of misreading the Buddha's intentions regarding the words he spoke about objects, and that Vasubandhu, in turn, accused all non-Mahayana Buddhists of misunderstanding the Buddha's intention. Vasubandhu's *Prajna-paramita* tradition had introduced the idea of a gap between the Buddha's intentions and the words he spoke. When, if ever, does Vasubandhu's Buddha say what he means and mean what he says? When are we to read his words literally, and when are we to interpret them provisionally and strategically? The issue over the reciprocity or lack thereof between the Buddha's words and his intention is a key to the front door of Vasubandhu's text. The text has many windows and various scholars of the *Vimsatika* have thrown most of them open to gain glimpses into Vasubandhu's genius; but there is a fine line between the idiot and the genius. Vasubandhu walks that tight-rope like a circus clown, feigning now and then to lose his balance, but always in control of the discourse; he turns his opponents' arguments upside down and backwards, hoping to throw them off their tottering balance to land them smack on the middle way. Vasubandhu's commentarial redundancy is a tell-tail. We all know that repetition is a hall mark of

Sanskrit and other literary traditions where the first step in learning a text is to memorize it. Repetition is a standard pedagogical pattern inherent in the structure of *shastras*; but that repetition is usually of a regulated refrain; repetitions help hammer the nails of knowledge from the text into the hearer's mind; it is a patterned pounding of points. In the *Vimsatika*, repetition seems to serve a different purpose. In the auto-commentary there are so many apparently unnecessary restatements of the verse-text that I am led to consider something funny is going on there. For example, Vasubandhu frequently gives voice to his opponents in the verse-text only to repeat the words of the verse verbatim in the commentary, offering no further explanation, no "in other words", no elucidation. A specific example of this is Vasubandhu's odd and irrelevant repetition of the compounds dream-like (*svapnavat*), puss-river, and ghee-pot. In each case he "explains" that dream-like means like a dream; puss-river means river-full-of-puss; and ghee-pot means pot-full of-ghee. Vasubandhu's own subsequent commentators offered a technical explanation for why Vasubandhu found it necessary to "explain", without really explaining, such apparently self-evident meanings of the compounds, and I have noted their explanation in the footnotes of my translation. I refer the reader to those notes, but I will not repeat the argument here because I do not think it provides a satisfactory account of what Vasubandhu is up to. There are numerous other verses repeated word-for-word in the auto-commentary for which no explanations, either technical or otherwise, are offered by the commentorial tradition. It should be obvious by now that I think Vasubandhu employs repetition as a mimicking device. The hermeneutic issue sustained throughout Vasubandhu's text concerns the lack of reciprocity between what the Buddha said and what the Buddha meant. By restating the verse-text in the auto-commentary as he so often and obviously does, without the slightest variation in re-wording, Vasubandhu is trying to create the impression that what he says is what he means, even if the Buddha's words must remain ambiguous for the time being. He is being cute, cunning, and calculated in his repetitions. Those who are in a better position than I to re-investigate

the structure of the *Vimsatika* may wish to challenge my storming, front-door entrance to the text; but I am hard-pressed to make sense of the work any other way. I mean no irreverence by caricaturing Vasubandhu as a clown, or court jester, or trickster. Nor do I suggest that he fits some universal motif like the well-known cultural role of the Native American Indian tricksters. We realize that in Sanskrit literature there is no genre which can be formally called "comedy" in the classical sense of the term, nevertheless Sanskrit literature does not lack humor. Nor do I suggest that the *Vimsatika* lacks seriousness of aim and purpose. I do not trivialize ancient sacred literature; at the same time, approaching this text with too much piety and deference for the *shastra* tradition, will inhibit the reader from considering the role that "holy humor" may play in giving us a new access to enter Vasubandhu's empty house. Though the notion of a crude and vulgar Sanskrit is an oxymoron, even the monk, Vasubandhu, shocks us with the most profane examples imaginable. Shit, piss, puss, and semen are among the first examples to which Vasubandhu appeals to make his case for waking cognitions being no different from cognitions in a dream. It is not beneath the dignity of Sanskrit discourse to use the most mundane and profane words to illustrate and prove propositions, or to denounce an opponent in unminced words as, for instance, when Kumarila likened Vasubandhu's duplicitous speech to calling spit nectar of the mouth -- and calling phlegm and mucus -- mouth-wine. But the words shit, piss, puss, and semen sound shocking as the first words out of the mouth of the monk. Stefan Anacker has combed the sources chronicling Vasubandhu's legendary life and the picture which emerges is not a far cry from the clown I see in the same biographical data. Anacker has dubbed Vasubandhu "the Buddhist Psychological doctor", and I agree with his portrayal except to qualify that I see Vasubandhu as the "mad-doctor-shock-therapist" whose textual antics and tactics are nothing short of hysterical. Laughter is good medicine and therapeutic in helping people to see that about themselves which, if pointed out any other way, may not be as easy to face and realize.

Vasubandhu thought he heard the words of the Buddha and answered his call. Vasubandhu walked out of his father's and Kumarila's Vedic house and into the Vaibhasika sangha. While living among the Vaibhasikas, Vasubandhu, a second time thought he heard different words of the Buddha, or the same old words differently, and followed the call, a second time, into the house of the Sautrantikas. Hearing the Buddha's words correctly is evidently no easy task. By and by Vasubandhu heard altogether new words of the *Tathagata* of the *Lotus sutra*. But this time the words rang and clanged clarity. The magical third time Vasubandhu did not merely think he heard, he certainly heard the Buddha speaking, announcing to all the myriad monks, including the tradition's most esteemed disciples, that they did not hear his words correctly. He heard the chimes of the *Prajna-paramita* bells ringing meaningful, if not true, ringing more clearly than all the false chimes of freedom that reverberated in dissipating tones, echoing back on the several houses he had abandoned to reach the house with no walls to contain him, no ceilings to restrain him. The obnoxious gonging of copper plates on a drunk elephant can be heard faintly, resounding back to Ghadahara, back to the courts of the royal Guptas, back to an infinite regress. He sits, he sees, he laughs at the loopholes of logic, but he does not speak, if by speech we mean professional, formally flawless, syllogistic reasoning (*anumana*). No one has allowed Vasubandhu to speak for himself -- to speak or not-speak -- in his own way not choked, constricted, and strangled by the cords of *shastra*. Vasubandhu is not bound to the Sakyamuni Buddha's Bodhi tree whose roots are as rotten as the limbs of inference. If Vasubandhu were permitted to speak for himself how would he speak? No one inside or outside of Vasubandhu's tradition ever extended a poetic licensee to the monk. Just as there are rules for *shastra*, there are rules for poetics. The *Vimsatika* does not completely or correctly conform to any commonly recognized genre in Sanskrit literature. In the *Vimsatika* we can <u>see</u> Vasubandhu speak, more clearly than we can hear his words. I am quite serious when I ask the reader of Vasubandhu's *Vimsatika* to see the text as a clown doing mime between

the lines, mimicking, and mirroring to us the folly of human faith in objects, ritual and profane. The *Vimsatika* presents itself to us as a drunk elephant, staggering on shaky legs of logic, and clattering its garland of twenty-odd copper plates. If the clown, court jester, jokerman, trickster, riddler, etc. are not root metaphors in Sanskrit literature, it should not surprise us that Vasubandhu tried to graft the metaphor onto the trunk of India's wishing tree, the magical tree that provides shelter and wish fulfillment to all. If we look into the antics of the *Vimsatika*, we just might see what only a clown can show us.

CHAPTER FOUR

BETWEEN THE TEXTS

The text gives primacy to the reader. It grants its reader this privilege , not merely after it has been composed, but during the act of writing itself. Though writing is certainly a cathartic and therapeutic act, one does not write to or for oneself, instead, one writes to and for another. But who is this other? Is it none other than the self projecting itself onto an imagined other in order to reify itself, or is there an authentic thou who is entirely other than who and what we are and what we think they are? Whose words are read? Can the text be anything other than the echo of the reader's own words? Is there ever any concomitance of mind between author and reader such that one can truly come to know the mind of an other? There is a profound sense in which the author depends, for his own understanding of the text, on the reader. It is altogether possible for an author to compose meaningful, moving words, and still be unaware of his own intention, the meaning of the words, or the impact of those words another person's mind. The reader is often in a better position to say what has been written than the author. A final step in writing is listening to what the readers hear. It is just possible that the reader, through the act of reading a text, can come to understand the mind of the author better than the author's mind understands itself. There is that about each of us which is known to ourselves alone, and that about each of us that is known both to ourselves and others; there is also that about each of us that is known, not to ourselves, but only to an other who can see that about us which we cannot see in ourselves. But can another person ever show us that about ourselves which we otherwise fail to see? Finally there is that about each of us which neither we nor anyone else knows anything about. Even if we can reduce the inter-relational gaps in knowing to a minimum by eliminating the secrets which we keep hidden from ourselves and others, there remains an unfathomable gulf of presumption. There are contradictions, I believe, rooted deep within the human psyche;

these contradictions are irresolvable and irreconcilable differences. Human beings do not generally like ambiguity; yet the human predicament is an embodiment of ambiguities and fundamental contradictions. Kumarila and Vasubandhu are two windows through which the reader is invited to look and see. Behold the profundity of human folly, individually and collectively. Vasubandhu's window is a circus mirror which reflects our forms distorted and twisted, ever-moving, sometimes fat, sometimes skinny, but always comical. Vasubandhu is a clown, but he is not joking. Life is a dream, but a serious one. He would counsel us to be alert; regardless of whether our eyes are wide open, half-open or half-closed, closed tight, one open and the other blind, awake or asleep, day dreaming or sleep walking, the monk would counsel us to be alert (*buddha*) to the power of the mind's enclosure in repressed impressions (*middha*), i.e. that movement of mind which normally overwhelms us in sleep so that we do not know we are dreaming. To know, whether waking or sleeping, that life is a dream is therapeutic knowledge. It is not a merely expedient device to trivialize the external world and wean people from attachments to their fleeting phantom objects. Dreams, if they can be read, provide both experience and reflective experience. Reading, reflecting, writing, etc., are all dream acts and these dreams can be shared. Life is shared movement of imagination wherein people walk in and out of one another's dreams, staging erotic entrances, cameo appearances, and nightmarish exits. Kumarila and Vasubandhu stage the drama of two dreams, or worlds in direct opposition with each other. Vasubandhu is knocking on the door of Kumarila's house, but Kumarila does not want to be disturbed. The knock does not even wake him from his sound, dreamless sleep. As far as Vasubandhu is concerned, Kumarila's deep sleep is also a dream. Kumarila reminds Vasubandhu that in order to dream, one has to be asleep; he charges Vasubandhu to wake up and cut the rhetoric which sabotages speech itself, confuses categories, and collapses dream and reality into a schizophrenic vision, like the two moons of an optical disorder seen by the two-eyed, blind, old owl. Their controversy is the externalization of the very same conflicts,

contradictions, incompatibilities, absurdities, and utterly irreconcilable differences at work within each individual human being. Each person plays out the drama of these differences by creating a coherent vision of the world to make sense of the paradoxes and antinomies. Irreconcilable differences within some human beings are sometimes played out entirely within, e.g. the schizophrenic. Other individuals externalize the differences, announce their identity in opposition to the other, and seek identity in the face of difference. Society is a complex, interactive drama where individuals act out, even if never able to fully work out, irreconcilable differences both within and between themselves. The question returns -- is there any common ground on which to locate common sense?

Now reflect in this connection on Kumarila's legendary loss of one eye and his denunciation of Vasubandhu for being as blind as an owl. The rhetoric of sight and blindness is the question of who sees what about whom? Recall the context in which Kumarila, disguised under robe and shaven head in the sangha, shed a tear from one eye while listening to the Buddhists' refutation of the Veda. That single tear betrayed him and the little word if lost him his eye. What are we to make of this? How are we to see and understand Kumarila and Vasubandhu in light of this legend? It is not the proverbial case of the blind leading the blind, but of the blind calling blind the one he does not, indeed, cannot see. Though it was the tear that betrayed Kumarila to the Buddhists and the if that cost him his eye, the word if must not be read out of context here. Remember, he shouted if as he was falling from the roof of a tall building. Some have interpreted the legend as a warning of the ill-fated consequences accompanying his lack of absolute faith in the scripture alone. But Kumarila's fall was not from grace -- he was pushed over by the Buddhist monks. Doubt is a respected category in Kumarila's tradition, not a sin for which one loses an eye. Doubt is a good and healthy thing; it gives rise to inquiry, reflection, investigation and discovery. All reasoning is occasioned by doubt; it is the

first impulse to know.[142] It was not for doubt that Kumarila lost his eye. If we look into the wider context of the if and when of Kumarila's fateful fall, we see Kumarila living and learning among the monks. The more he learned and understood of Yogacara doctrine and discipline, the more his own Vedic vision began to blur. He lost focus on the unitary vision of the sacrifice and began to see double, keeping always one eye vigilantly tending to the Vedic flame and the other eye watching and studying every move and turn, every trick, and slight of hand of the "mind-only", no eyes, blind old Buddhist owls. Kumarila's loss of one eye, viewed in this context, symbolizes his commitment to see things through a single lens, close-up and focused. He is committed to seeing the world as a householder, not as a monk; Kumarila's world is a house full of the pressures and pleasures of intimacy, family, and social relations. Kumarila's house is built in the real world with real bricks; in his the house real crying of real children can actually be heard, uncensored and unsilenced. His house is not to be declared empty or condemned, neither is it a house to be abandoned. Children are secure in Kumarila's house; there are no false fire alarms which compel a father to speak falsities to his children. There can be no twin vision of reality for Kumarila; his house, like his vision, is one house, indivisible with justice, order (*rta*) and social responsibility (*dharma*) for all. Kumarila had seen quite enough of Vasubandhu's Yogacara and would rather go to *svarga* with one eye than return to the Yogacara sangha with two eyes wide open and nothing to see but emptiness. Thus for Kumarila, the Yogacara sangha was now a bottomless pit, a black hole where no one is home -- no self, and no other -- and only endless emptiness and the perpetual non-sense of nothingness remain. To gain Kumarila's perspective requires the sacrifice of an eye -- no double moons, no optical disorders -- seeing things with one eye is not the same as seeing only half the picture.

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[142] G.P. Bhatt, *The Basic ways of Knowing*. See pp. 91-93 for a succinct definition of doubt, its causes and role in the process of knowing; also, Satichandra Chatterjee, *The Nyaya Theory of Knowledge: A Critical Study of Some Problems in Logic and Metaphysics* , pp. 28-32 on Doubt.

What do competing systems of thought entail? What are they trying to say to us? How should this discourse on life be performed? To answer this question Kumarila and Vasubandhu have fundamentally different approaches and methodologies. They represent the unresolved tension in Indian thought between the householder and the monk, between the upholder of the social order and the renunciant of all social relations. Kumarila is a householder for whom activity is object-centered. He must shoulder the concerns of everyday affairs, overseeing the welfare of his legendary 500 male and 500 female servants. He lives life in the intensity of intimacy, embracing his various social roles and relations, fulfilling them in accordance with *dharmic* responsibility. Human interests are served because objects are real in time, space, and public experience. Being and non-being are different kinds of entities; both are equally real, and the relation between them is just as real. Also, entities like substance, attribute, quality, self, body, time, and space are real. Kumarila's epistemology is that consciousness displays things as they are in themselves. The means of knowledge are perception, inference, scriptural testimony, etc.; the means of knowledge are all valid and carry truth claims -- no error, no fantasy, no illusion or imagination, no mystical or meta-sensory experience. Kumarila is against meta-sensory, meditative intuition because he does not want to replace the meaning of action with empty, meaningless, abstract contemplation. Kumarila's theory of language is reference-oriented. Doing is the reason for knowing and speaking, and there is a reciprocity between things and the cognitions of things through which we do things (*krita kriya*). This principle constitutes the cardinal rules of life, without which the meaning of things in the human scheme will be lost. Things that we see in dreams should not be generalized.

Vasubandhu is a monk for whom activity is subject-centered. His method is internal and finds solution in consciousness itself, which is the locus or field of the problem itself, i.e. suffering. This is primary for Vasubandu who is interested in the being of things and our doing things with them. We do meaningful things with fantasy objects.

He is not so interested in things, but in functions and events. Something is true because it functions in a certain way. Pragmatic theory rejects correspondence theory whereas correspondence theory of knowledge is itself a construct of consciousness. Truth is not given as it is in itself; rather, it is given in terms of human interest. Cognitions are means through which to realize a predetermined end. We engage in mental and physical actions with imagined, experienced, felt, known, but non-real objets. People should realize that life is a dream.

To the question of how the discourse on life should be done, Kumarila would say we should do it rationally, ritually, and epistemologically. There are no actions unless there are means by which to perform them. If one has no means for doing anything, there is no point in trying to achieve any given aim. Only rightfully oriented people (Brahmins) can study and learn the text on what rituals are and how to perform them. Kumarila restricts the universality of performance of rituals to privileged people. How are we to perform reflection on existence? Existence is *dharma* action and actions are to be performed ritualistically; there are rules for performing the reflections just as there are rules for performing the ritual actions. Both must be done according to previously authorized means. To this question Kumarila will say reflections need to be performed in a ritual situation which entails actions that seek achievement of religious and material ends *(pursartha)*. Kumarila gives primacy to the mechanical side of actions. If one does rituals properly, the desired result is attained. How one does things determines the results of the actions. There are procedures about how to place things, what things to place, by whom they should be placed, where to place them, etc.. The procedures are so elaborate that the human side is lost. Kumarila has elevated the mechanical to the scientific for his own interests; the priests alone know how to perform ritual actions.

Vasubandhu says that intention *(sam kalpa)* is central to living a moral life. Kumarila accuses the Yogacarin of rejecting the self and, with it, all moral responsibility. Vasubandhu in turn accuses people like Kumarila of devaluing moral life

by institutionalizing and religiousizing it. Kumarila alienates the agent and his intention from the result because the priest performs the ritual act on behalf of the supplicant who desires an intended aim. The manufactured objects of sacrifice are more important than the subject who brings those objects to the ritual. This view of objects devalues the agent and the intention behind the act because the act is performed, not by the intending agent, but by the priest. Vasubandhu says that sacrificial ritual actions are a displacement of our suffering, driving us away from the real problem and diverting our attention to something over there. Consciousness establishes its own dependence on the things it creates.

Kumarila does not grant sovereignty to consciousness. He insists that consciousness can do meaningful things only if there are things. Consciousness cannot reduce things to itself. If external objects are not independent of consciousness, then consciousness can do anything at all, anywhere, anytime. Kumarila detects a defect in Vasubandhu's position: If subjectivity of consciousness is so powerful that it can create the world, then it is beyond control and has become sovereign (*adhi patya)*. Vasubandhu wants to understand the world from his meditative tradition which controls images. He practices meditation as a means of self-control. It is because we lack self-control that we see things at all. Lack of control over our consciousness forces us to see things in the first place. Since consciousness has created the world, it can change it by changing itself. But how do you turn consciousness away from objects? The answer is -- destroy them. Even if Vasubandhu agrees with Kumarila that the Buddha taught as he did regarding objects in order to turn his disciples' attention away from the objects of this world, what options does Kumarila have by which to do so?[143] For Kumarila consciousness cannot do or undo anything regarding the object. Consciousness has no control over anything which is not of its own doing. Kumarila is being faithful to his whole Brahmanical tradition which affirms the otherness of God, Brahman, etc., and universally teaches transcendentalism, a metaphysics of presence which is transcendent to consciousness. In

[143] Kumarila Bhatta, "*Niralambanavada*" v. 202 in *Slokavartikam*.

Kumarila's particular metaphysics of presence, God, Brahman, etc., are conspicuously absent. The sacrifice fills the absence, marginalizing the presence of God(s) to the periphery. Ritual is not a means to destroy objects, the external world, or forces transcendental to consciousness; ritual is a means to appease, to find favor. It is a method to efficiently use external objects for our own gain. Kumarila believes that efficacy is inseparable from reality or truth; so also there is inseparability between the means and the ends. Both the means and ends are real, and the relation between them is real. If one of them, say the means, were unreal, the other --the ends, too-- would lose both meaning and value. He believes that the medium of material, moral, and religious prosperity *(preya)* is as real and true as the aim. Vasubandhu says the only thing truthful is the mission, the aim, namely the emptiness *(sunyata)* of all images. The means can be illusory but the aim is not. Kumarila, on the other hand, says that if the means are delusory, then so is the end, aim, or mission. The central thing in the controversy about aim and means is imagination *(parikalpana)*. This imagination is universal. How it imagines is universal. For Vasubandhu imagination is not a private thing. The propensity to project is universal, and imaginations, no matter how peculiar, can be shared. The world is shared movement of imagination. According to Vasubandhu's observation, it is a fact that life is momentary suffering. People cannot accept this fact; they do not like to accept that they are dying every moment. The propensity to deny reality and project an imagination on it is common. Vasubandhu returns the question to Kumarila: Should this everyday phenomenon be a theme of thought? People do not like their beliefs to be dismantled. It is a traumatic experience to realize that what we thought was so is not so.

It should be noted that there is a very human dimension to this intellectual discourse on both sides. Vasubandhu believes that suffering, sorrow, and happiness all have to do with consciousness, not with objects. There are no objects. Vasubandhu places a high premium on consciousness' propensity to suffer. Humans are responsible for their own sorrow and happiness. They suffer and they can overcome suffering; hence

the importance of Yoga-meditation. All of this Kumarila questions. He believes that there are unseen forces *(adrista)* external to consciousness. It is the autonomy of objects and the external world that causally contribute to happiness and sorrow. Actions are necessary but these actions are formal, not individual. The actions are ritually performed in strict accord with Vedic prescriptive injunction. Analytically speaking, Kumarila is more empathetic to human suffering. Human beings are not completely responsible for their own suffering and / or happiness since there are real external forces *(adrista)* which exert definite influence. Sometimes reality encroaches upon imagination and people need help; hence the need for rituals.

I have shown how different Vasubandhu and Kumarila are. In doing so I have been honest to the method of Sanskrit discourse. Vedanta and Mahayana have been discussed in great length and detail concerning whether and to what extent they may be different from each other.[144] Scholars have drawn the lines and taken their sides on the basis of subtleties which alone constitute the distinction of one system from the other. A margin of ambiguity and uncertainty does not exist between Kumarila and Vasubandhu. There is a serious gulf in regard to the visions of life they each inculcate. In spite of the fact that both parties in this debate affirm the centrality of action, common sense, epistemology, scriptural authority, and salvation, the confrontation reveals opposite and totally conflicting visions of these controlling categories of thought. The respective stances taken by Kumarila and Vasubandhu cannot be compromised; the difference is fundamental. Contrary to what modern scholars of Sanskrit thought often say, there is no "synthetic unity" between Hinduism and Buddhism, not even within Hinduism itself. There never was. This difference between and within the scholarly community is important and total. The discourse is not synthetic, but argumentative. It illustrates the persistence of recurring difference. The lines of the *shastra* weave a spider's web of

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[144] Gregory Darling, *Vedantic Critique of Buddhism*; also, Stephen Kaplan, "The Yogacara roots of Advaita Idealism? Noting a Similarity Between Vasubandhu and Gaudapada" Journal of Indian Philosophy, vol. 20; pp. 191-218.

claims and counter-claims calculated to catch a fly; and were it not for the resounding and prevailing "established opinion" (*siddhantapaksa),* the text would be an embodiment of cacophonous voices clamoring incessantly for equal time and the last word. But there is no final word between the texts. There is no peace of mind. There is no middle way between Kumarila and Vasubandhu. They cannot be reconciled. Thought is accosted at every turn by counter-thought. Though everyone claims to have the last word, no one does.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSLATION

Translating thoughts, even within the same language, is a difficult thing. Translation entails a condition of understanding. Translation difficulties are not linguistic; they are positional. The texts are more than linguistic embodiment. They express two totally different visions of life. My anguish is not trivial or personal; it is inherent in the texts themselves.

The terse, aphoristic style of the *shastra* literary tradition makes reading the texts difficult, to say the least. Telegraphic brevity and metrical restraints give an almost cryptic texture to the genre. It has been noted that the *shastras* were used as springboards from which its author would expound orally to students. The *shastra* tradition is rooted in the necessity for accompanying oral instruction. In the context of discussing verbal testimony (*sabda)* as a valid means of knowing (*pramana),* J.N. Mohanty underscores the fact that oral transmission of knowledge enjoys a primacy over the written word. He further observes that, whereas modern Western philosophies have not recognized verbal utterance as an independent means of knowledge, many Indian epistemologies recognize the utterances of a competent speaker (*apta*) as the decisive source of our cognitions about matters that transcend the limits of possible sensory experience. The text is born in need of a teacher. Intelligibility of the written text is largely inaccessible to the private reader. While the text is a primary resource in education, the teacher is far from superfluous. One who is competent to explicate the allusions and fill in the verbal gaps is indispensable for a comprehensible reading. Thus the text's elliptical brevity defies the reader to a privatized interpretation. The problems entailed in translating such texts are legion. A case in point is the frequent use of the term *adi*, translated as *etc*.. It rarely occurs merely to fill the meter, though indeed that is the very constraint which prevents

the author from writing all that he had in mind. Nevertheless, *adi* represents something missing, though discernibly implicit in the reading. Its presence stands in the metrical gap; its appearance is seldom extraneous. In some instances what is missing is tangential to the fundamental meaning of the sentence; in other occurrences the apt discernment of what is missing is absolutely essential to the grammatical completion of the sentence. For Mimamsakas, the sentence carries the meaning of intelligible utterance, not individual words. For example, in the opening verses of "*Niralambanavada*" the five-fold topical division of the Vedas is enumerated, omitting *nisheda* (prohibitions) because the author has already exhausted all but two of the allotted syllables. Hence, *adi* stands in the place of *nisheda*. In other cases, knowing what *adi* specifies is utterly indispensable to establishing the meaning of the sentence. The role of *adi* is a concrete example of the type of difficulty the aphoristic style presents to the reader *cum* translator. And while *adi* signals the difficulty, at least its presence in the verse indicates that something is missing. It serves as a prompter, alerting the reader that something must be supplied to complete the meaning of the sentence.

It is often the case that no such telltale, like *adi*, appears; in such cases the reader is left to puzzle over what words need to be supplied in order to render the verse intelligible. It is not uncommon to encounter a single word or two which are calculated to invoke a host of other words and phrases without which the sentence remains incomplete and, therefore, incomprehensible. Of course, the commentarial tradition fills many of those gaps, providing keys with which to complete the *gestalt*. In the absence of these exegetical, expository commentaries and sub-commentaries, it is no exaggeration to suggest that some texts simply cannot be read without a teacher.

The debate which ensues within the text is characterized by questions and counter-questions, and objections and rebuttals. More often than not, however, the conjectured objection to which the author is responding is not explicitly stated in text. Based in part on the answer the author provides, and in part on a familiarity with the

opponent's views, the whole conversation can be reconstructed. Reading the "*Niralambanavada*" is akin to overhearing one end of a telephone conversation; unless one can reasonably infer what the unheard party is saying, it is difficult to make sense out of what is heard. One particularly confounding example of this involves a discussion based upon the *Purvapaksa* passage in the Bhasya of Sabara.

> *Nanu sarva eva niralambanah svapnavat pratyayah pratyayasyapi Niralambanatasvabhava upalakshitah svapne; Jagrato'pi stambha iti va Kudya iti va pratyaya eva bhavati; tasmat so'pi Niralambanah.*
>
> All cognitions are without support like those in a dream;
> the nature of cognition as having no support is realized in dream ;
> even such notions of a waking person as 'it is a pillar' or 'it is a wall' are also cognitions and as such have no support.

The Yogacarins have evidently charged the author of the *Bhasya* with misrepresenting Vasubandhu's position due to bias and / or carelessness. Kumarila, however, defends the author of the *Bhasya* while simultaneously correcting the Yogacarins' misreading of the way Sabara had presented their position. The interpretive issue hinges on the word *eva,* which can indicate either added emphasis to the word it qualifies, or that the word carries a distributive meaning in the given sentence. If taken in the first sense as signaling emphasis, the Yogacarins' proposition would include all cognitions *without exception;* however, if taken in the distributive sense, it would include only those cognitions of the waking state. If *eva* is taken emphatically, the proposition would incur the defect of trying to prove what the opponent already accepts since even the Mimamsakas acknowledge that dream cognitions are without the immediate and contactual presence of external objects as their support. Furthermore, the inclusion of the word *eva*, if taken to add emphasis, would not help to convey the intended meaning of the proposition; i.e. the expression would have been clear if *eva* had been omitted, rather than included. Whereas, if *eva* is interpreted in its distributive sense, Vasubandhu's proposition would avoid the three defects about which Yogacarins are presumably complaining. It is a mark of Kumarila's genius and evenhandedness that he first rescues Vasubandhu's proposition

from the Yogacarins' misreading-reading, only to systematically and thoroughly dismember it on its own terms.

Another example wherein we read a one-sided conversation and must fill-in the missing half occurs in the translation of verses 28 and 29. The conjectured criticism to which this verse responds is that the *purvapaksa* passage as presented in Sabara's *Bhasya* lacks a reason *(hetu)*. The *hetu* is usually expressed by means of the ablative case ending, conspicuously absent in this verse. Kumarila again vindicates Sabara's wording of the *Bhasya* by clarifying the order in which the syllogism appears. In so doing he makes the presence of the *hetu* quite obvious. The confusion arises due to the various ways in which the members or limbs *(avayavas)* of the Nyaya syllogism may be arranged. While the Nyaya formulation includes five limbs, Mimamsa employs only three, and Buddhism reduces the number to merely two. To complicate the matter further, the three-fold presentation of Mimamsa can be either of Nyaya's first three or last three limbs. Unless it is quite clear which procedure is being adopted, it is difficult to discern the logical unfolding of the sequence. Furthermore, it must be realized that the initial statement of the *purvapaksa* is not part of the syllogistic formulation; instead it is an introductory re-iteration of the Yogacarins' proposition *(pratijna)* with an accompanying example. If one were to mistake this general recapitulation of the Yogacarin proposition for the first limb of the syllogism, it would be difficult indeed to discern the presence of any *hetu*, the very matter that constitutes the formal problem addressed in this verse.

In the *Bhasya*, according to Kumarila's reading, the author couches the syllogism in terms of the last three limbs of the Nyaya syllogistic formulation: *udaharana, upanaya and nigamana*. Kumarila's task is to demonstrate the presence of the *hetu* in the syllogism. The first half of this verse calls attention to the role of the *hetu* in helping to establish the *vyapti*, and is a precise statement of the *vyapti*, i.e. the mention of the *hetu* as pervaded by the *sadhya*. Specifically applied to the syllogism, it indicates that the *hetu*, namely, the property of being a cognition, is pervaded by the *sadhya*, the property of

being without any corresponding external object as its support. The second half of the verse clearly reveals the reason *(hetu)* by means of the fourth limb of the Nyaya syllogistic formula, *upanaya*. *Upanaya* is the application of the *vyapti*, the invariable concomitance established in the first half of the verse to the present case, i.e., waking cognitions. This is in strict accord with the role of the *upanaya* whose function it is to show the presence of the *hetu*, as qualified by the *vyapti*, in the *paksa*. If we were to construe the syllogism, as Kumarila suggests we do, using the last three members of the Nyaya syllogism, it would read as follows:

1. *Udaharana:* a statement of the invariable concomitance between the *hetu* and the *sadhya*, together with an example: "All cognitions are without support, like dream cognitions."
2. *Upanaya:* the application of the *hetu* to the *paksa*: "Waking cognition is a case of cognition."
3. N*igamana:* conclusion*:* "Therefore, waking cognition is without any corresponding external objects for its support."

For the sake of clarity we identify the constituent parts of the *pratijna* below:

1. *Paksa*: All (waking) cognitions
2. S*adhya:* [all waking cognitions] are without corresponding external objects as their support.
3. H*etu:* the characteristic of being a cognition.

The limbs of the syllogism at issue in this verse are delineated below:

1. *Udaharana-* The character of being a cognition is (invariably concomitant with) possessing the character of having no corresponding external object as its support; e.g. dream cognitions.
2. *Upanaya-* Waking cognitions are a case of cognitions.
3. *Nigamana-* Therefore, waking cognitions are without support.

Frequently difficulties arise in discerning whose voice is being represented in a given verse (*sloka).* A particularly complicated example of this occurs in verses 28-29. Although this passage concerns the *Siddhanta paksa* of the *Bhasya*, we have rendered it in **bold type** because, as we will contend, it implicitly represents the voice of the Yogacarins' in criticism of the *Bhasya's Siddhanta paksa*. The argument here is subtle, the intricacy of which we believe is overlooked by B.K. Matilal's otherwise insightful treatment of verses 28-30 in *Perception: An Essay in Classical Indian Theories of Knowledge*. Matilal presumes that Shabara attributes the two defects mentioned in verse 29 of "*Niralambanavada*" to the Yogacarins' *purvapaksa* in the *Bhasya*. Matilal writes, "Kumarila says that according to Shabara the argument can alternatively be identified as a *vikalpa-sama* or a *vaidharmya-sama* variety of sophistry." Matilal then offers a lucid explanation of these two defects as they would apply to the Yogacarins' *purvapaksa*. His explanation of these two defects is inapplicable because, as we will show, the defects only arise if the *purvapaksa* passage is misread. We will argue that it is the Yogacarin, not Sabara, who attributes the defects to Sabara's wording of the *Siddhanta paksa* of the *Bhasya* and not to the *purvapaksa* at all. A more careful consideration of the verse in context reveals that Kumarila is fielding an anticipated criticism of the Yogacarins concerning the manner in which Sabara has presented the *Siddhantapaksa*. Yogacara's misreading and consequent criticism of Sabara's *Siddhanta paksa* is reflected in verses 28-29 of our translation. The *Siddhantapaksa* reads:

> *Stambha iti Jagrato buddhi superniccita katham viparyeshyati.*
>
> "How can you (Yogacarins) think that the notion attested to by all waking people is mistaken when the notion of (something so obvious as) a pillar is of a decisive nature?"

Sabara's *Siddhanta paksa* intends only to establish the contradiction of *niralambana* by means of perception and other applicable *pramanas* and not to establish the certainty (decisive nature) of waking cognitions. In verses 28-29 the Yogacarin argues that Sabara has provided the property of being decisive as the reason for a cognition having support,

i.e. being *salambana*. The Yogacarins think that the statement of the *Bhasya* is an inference in which decisive nature *(superniscaya)* refers to the reason (*hetu*); however, according to Kumarila's reading, this is not Sabara's purport. Hence, the Yogacarins' criticism is based on their erroneous assumption that the *Bhasya* asserts a reason that is not beyond dispute, i.e. is not acceptable to both parties. This lack of acceptability to both parties is expressed in the verse by the technical term *vikalpsamata*, and is one of the twenty-two possible defects *(jati)* of debate as established in the *Nyaya Sutra*. The other defect referred to in the verse is *vaidharmyasamata* which constitutes an inconsistency if one differentiating property is inferred on the basis of another differentiating property involving a *vyapti* not beyond dispute by either party. The Yogacarins' argument, which is based on a misreading of the *Siddhanta paksa*, maintains that although the property of being a notion is common to all cognitions including those of the waking as well as dreaming states, only some cognitions, even in the waking state, have the property of being decisive in nature *(superniscaya)*. Therefore, only some of the waking cognitions would prove to have support *(salambana)*, but those which are not decisive in nature would not be established. Kumarila dismisses the criticism on the grounds that it is based upon a misreading of the *Bhasya*. According to Kumarila, the word *superniscaya* does not refer to the reason for inferring the *salambana* of cognitions as the Yogacarins have supposed; rather, Kumarila establishes that *superniscaya* qualifies *pratyaksa* (perception), thereby indicating ascertainment of the decisive nature of cognitions by means of perception, in other words *superniscaya* is adjectival to *pratyaksa* and other *pramanas* instrumental for properly investigating the nature of external objects; it is not proposed to assert or establish the objective support *(salambana)* of cognitions.

Our reading is in keeping with Kumarila's intention expressed in verse 18 to examine whether or not objects exist by means of inferential reasoning. Moreover he announces in this same verse that this will be his tack, and he dismisses the examination of the objects themselves. Our reading is consistent with Kumarila's expressed purpose

and procedure of his project in the *"Niralambanavada"*. Our stance is further corroborated by verse 11's emphatic pronouncement of the text's purpose to refute theYogacara notion that the fruits of action are not different from the pleasures of a dream. It is not the mission of Sabara's *Bhasya* nor the burden of *"Niralambanavada"* to establish what, as far as Mimamsakas are concerned, is already universally attested to by common sense -- namely the real existence of external objects. We agree with Jha's translation of verses 28-29 in so far as his rendering indicates the defects are attributed to Sabara's *siddhantapaksa.* However, it appears that Jha understands the criticism as coming from Kumarila; on the contrary, we have contended that Kumarila does not criticize, but vindicates, Sabara's wording of the *siddhantapaksa*.

In some cases more than one voice is represented in the same verse. For example, verse 40 moves back and forth from Mimamsa's ridicule to the Yogacarins' rejoinder, and concludes with Mimamsa's promise to settle the score in what will follow. Here is a case where translation inevitably fails to make the impact of the original text. The discussion hinges on the debater's handling of the terms *vastu* and *abhave*, terms which the concerned parties understand differently. According to Kumarila, *abhave* (absence) is *vastu* (really existent). Yogacara believes on the other hand that *abhave* (a negative entity) is not *vastu* (a real existent). According to Yogacara, a *vastu* is by definition positive in nature. As far as Kumarila is concerned, if something is *avastu* (not really existent), it cannot exist in cognition; if, on the other hand, something exists in cognition, it must be *vastu* (really existent). On this basis, Kumarila ridicules the Yogacarins' notion of *kalpita* (imagination) because Kumarila maintains that imagination is actually a superimposition of something which necessarily exists somewhere. Accordingly, if *niralambana* existed somewhere, it could be rightly assumed to belong to a cognition; but, if even by Yogacara's own admission, it does not exist anywhere, then it cannot be assumed to exist even in a cognition.

Having singled out these few *slokas* as exemplary of the difficulties in the task of translation, I should add that few verses are free of such challenges. *Sanskrit*, it may be noted, literally signifies that which is well-done, that which is polished, that which is perfect. Therefore, translation from Sanskrit to English must by definition be "rough", but is translation even possible? It is an especially difficult task to translate Kumarila and Vasubandhu in terms of each other. Whether they understand each other's views as each understands his own is a good question. Clearly, each understands his own tradition in contra-distinction to the other. There is an added difficulty in understanding one in terms of the other because many of the key words employed in the discourse have different meanings for Vasubandhu and Kumarila. For example, the very title of Kumarila's work includes one of the most important concepts around which the entire controversy revolves. In spite of the fact that the monk and the householder, Vasubandhu and Kumarila, share no common understanding of the root term in the title of Kumarila's text, i.e. *alambana*, the discourse does not move around in an endless circle of impasse. There is a genuine meeting of minds in debate. Though the two authors (traditions) do not see "eye-to-eye", nevertheless they manage to engage each other in one of the most passioned and profound encounters in the history of human intellectual discourse. To enter their texts is to be caught-up in a whirlwind of words and meanings sufficient to overwhelm even the most discerning readers. In one sense, it is amazing that these two Indian gurus can speak with each other at all; but they do. They are both masters of rhetoric, thoroughly trained in the art of disputation. They know the rules of discourse and how to couch terms and phrases cogently and persuasively. They handle the loftiest ideas entertained by the human mind and do so with a parlance that invites and captivates the attention of the common man and woman. They appeal to homely, examples from everyday life to illustrate the most abstract philosophical subtitles imaginable. The intricacy and symmetry of Kumarila's syllogistic soliloquies are a thing of beauty. Indian logic is not the stilted scholasticism that it is often portrayed as. To follow Kumarila's

route of reasoning is to be led on high adventure. It is not casual reading; reading Sanskrit *shastra* requires an intensity of concentration equal to that of deep yogic meditation. Kumarila, as we have shown, has no appreciation for mystical meditation. He prefers to focus his mental energies on sustained, rigorous reasoning. The conversation represented within each text evidences as much tension as there is between the texts. The complete conflict rages within the head of each guru as if he were carrying on the whole of the conversation within his own mind. It is difficult to see how one mind can so fully encompass both sides of the issue without being torn asunder by the utter irreconcilability of the polar perspectives. The reader who listens-in on the debate is drawn into the center of the battlefield and is often at a complete loss about which side to take. It is difficult not to take sides because the competing texts seek to compel their audience to flee from the thick of the field and find safety, even salvation, in the coherence and consistency of a unified vision of life. The two gurus contend for the minds and hearts of the hearers. It is not possible to merely lend a single ear to the text's and texts' two voices. Both ears must be situated squarely between the gripping voices of the gurus. The Sanskrit root for guru means "heavy" or "weighty". They are so named in relation to the disciple who, by contrast, is light and persuadable. The disciple is weaned from his guru only when he is no longer overwhelmed by the sheer weight and power of the master's mind. To read both gurus in their conflicting context is to be doubly overwhelmed. I confess that even after translating both texts, I remain the texts' student, trapped between them with no view of exit or escape. The issues are not merely academic; they are existentially engrossing and all consuming. Both sides offer positive critiques; they are not just negative refutations of each other. But is it possible to appropriate positive and therapeutic insights from both sides and reconcile them into a harmonious and unifying way of life in the world, or are the two critiques so conflicting that to incorporate them into a single vision is to go blind, deaf and dumb, if not schizophrenic? The voices of *paksa* and *purvapaksa* resound in incessant and urgent

tones pulling and pressing the "one who desires to know". In keeping with the *shastra* tradition, dialogue is done, not to discover new truths, but to reiterate already known and well-established truth to which the authors belong and which they represent. The occasion for reiterating is the arrival of a new text, a new thinker whose challenges must be refuted. Problems and solutions are neither individual nor private. There are no new truths or questions; there are only new arguments which must be counter-argued. There are recurring questions which can never be answered definitely. Great answers are so because they cannot be refuted.

CHAPTER SIX

NIRALAMBANAVADA

1-3 If cognitions were devoid of corresponding external objects, then validity and invalidity, merit and demerit and their respective consequences, the assumption of injunctions, eulogistic passages, the meanings of mantras, proper names and prohibitions, and also the coherence of all the chapters as established by valid means of proof, the differentiation between an opponent's objection and its refutation made evident through the discrete use of words, the relation of actions to their results in this world and the next, all this and more would become irrelevant.

4 Therefore, for the sake of actions those who are desirous of incurring merit should endeavor first to investigate by means of commonly accepted proofs whether or not objects have existence.

5 **"Even though only cognition exits, all this empirical reality can be explained through the notion of contingent reality[145], consequently it is pointless to insist upon the hypothesis of autonomous external objects.[146]**

145 The technical use of the term *samvrti* is here variously translated as phenominic and contingent in order to convey its connotation as empirical and relative respectively. The term is multifarious in its technical use and according to the context we render it variously. Yogacara employs *'Samvriti satya'* in much the same way as *Vedanta* uses the terms *avidya* or *maya*. There are two powers of *avidya* or *maya*: *avarana sakti* and *viksepa sakti*, the powers of concealment and projection respectively. First, reality is concealed and then projection occurs as in the classical case of the snake-rope illusion. Yogacara emphasizes the first power without which projection cannot occur and calls it *samvrti*, false, or that which only appears to be real. Both Yogacara and Mimamsa inculcate detachment from the external world but choose different means by which to do so. Yogacara supposes that it is psychologically easier to convince people to wean themselves from the world by identifying it as *samvrti*. However, for the Mimamsaka, mere expediency does not justify an erroneous depiction of the world as *samvrti*.

146 This verse contains the purvapaksa of the Yogacarin. **The bold type** will signal the words of the text which give voice to the Yogacarin and, while the words are necessarily placed in their mouth by Kumarila, it is characteristic of the *shastra* to represent the opponent's view at

6 Reality does not belong to what is contingent and therefore how can the reality be divided into two-[*samvriti* and *paramartha*]? If it is real, how can it be contingent? If it is false, how can it be real?[147]

7 Because of contradiction, truth is not a commonalty of both the false and the real. Indeed, a tree does not share its distinguishing characteristic with a lion.[148]

8 There is synonymy between the words false and contingent. Yet Yogacara's use of such words is a case of linguistic cunning, like calling spit, nectar of the mouth.[149]

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least as well as the opponent would do himself. In this way the argument is not merely carried on with a straw man.

[147] This verse is a counter-question posed by Mimamsa in response to the objection raised by Yogacara in the preceding verse. Kumarila issues a negation of synonymy between *samvrti* and *satya*. *Kutas nu ayum* rhetorically asks what possible syntactical or semantic connection can there be between two terms which when compounded could only spell an oxymoron. *Mrsa, asat, asatya*, are all used synonomously with *samvritisatya*.

[148] Whereas in the preceding verse Kumarila issued a negation of synonymy between the terms *samvrtti* and *satya*, here he asserts the negation of any common universal between them. His point is escalated here by the further contrast he provides between a tree and a lion. Even such things that are not contradictory, but merely different, do not share the same universal property, much less two terms like *samvrti* and *satya* which are completely opposite to each other.

[149] The Yogacara maintains that all cognitions are equally *niralambana*, whether illusory or "correct". The only distinction they recognize between such cognitions is on the basis of practical efficacy (*arthakriya*). Objects of cognition that generate a practical result are regarded as *samvrtisatya* (empirically real), whereas objects of illusion are *mithya* (unreal). These are the two terms to which Kumarila attributes synonymy in this verse. Furthermore, Kumarila will not tolerate the juxtaposition of the two words *samvrti and satya*. G.P. Bhatt's comments on this verse elucidate the issue succinctly: "*Satya* and *mithya* are mutually exclusive terms. If *samvrti* is not *mithya* it must be *satya* in the same sense in which cognition is taken to be, and if it is not *satya* it must be *mithya* like an illusion. The existence of an intermediate entity, partly *mithya* and partly *satya* is logically impossible." The Basic Ways of Knowing, p.101. Kumarila takes his stance on the firm ground of either/or logic and declares his posture as such from the very beginning of the treatise, a stance which he will rigorously and tenaciously sustain throughout the intricate syllogistic argumentation which ensues. I believe it is this very fundamental difference in methodological thought between Kumarila and Yogacara that accounts for the impasse which ultimately inhibits either side from being able to appreciatively hear the case of the other.

9 And the hypothesis of contingent truth is designed to disguise their anti-Vedic stance. Even the idea of contingent truth is not possible on the assumption of consciousness without object.

10 That which does not exist, that indeed is not real. That which exists autonomously (of consciousness), that alone is truth, whatever is different from that is false. The hypothesis of a two-fold reality is not possible.

11 The contention of this text is to establish the absolute reality of external objects by refuting the notion that "as enjoyment of objects does not require reality of its content in dream, similarly even in the waking state no reality of content is required".[150]

12-13 No one is inclined to perform meritorious deeds to obtain pleasures occurring in a dream. Since dreams happen spontaneously without any effort, therefore a pundit, who desires the attainment of real results, would just sit silently (doing nothing to obtain pleasure in this world or the next). Therefore one must strive to obtain proper understanding of external objects by valid means of knowledge.

14 Of the two distinct schools of Mahayana, Yogacara takes refuge in consciousness devoid of external objects, while Madhyamika denies even the existence of consciousness itself.[151]

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150 This text establishes the reality of objects in order to refute the claim that the pleasure and pain ensuing out of good or evil deeds are like pleasure and pain caused by dream objects.

151 This verse must be read in the context of a hypothetical objection raised against the author of the *Bhasya*, Sabara. We may suppose that *Sabara's* refutation of Yogacara is being criticized for failing to address the Madhyamika's denial, not merely of the reality of external

15 Denial of external objects is common to both schools, Madhyamikas however, move one step further to assert falsehood of even cognition.

16 Since the falsehood of external objects is accepted commonly by both schools and is also the basis of Madhyamikas denial of consciousness, that is why the author of the *Bhasya*, Sabara, endeavored to investigate whether or not objects exist.

17 There are two ways by which the reality of external objects may be rejected. One is to examine the very nature of the object itself; the other depends on the scope of the *pramanas* themselves.[152] Of the two, examination of the object itself may be dismissed.

18-19 The Yogacarins reject the external object on the basis of two *pramanas*, perception and inference. The author of the *Bhasya* takes up the second one first, (namely, the Yogacarin inference for refuting external objects) because the Mimamsakas' perception, which contradicts the Yogacarin inference, will also contradict the Yogacarin perception. The Yogacarin inference will be contradicted by means of Mimamsakas' perception and on account of the close examination of the capacity inherent in Mimamsakas' perception. Thereafter it

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objects but, also of the reality of consciousness itself. In the following two verses Kumarila defends the author of the *Basya* by pointing out that the Madhyamikas' denial of consciousness hinges on their denial of external objects; hence by establishing the reality of external objects, Kumarila and *Sabara* aim to kill two birds of similar feathers with a single stone!

152 The standard procedure generally followed in the *shastras* begins with an examination of the topic itself which, in this case, happens to be an investigation of the nature of external objects. After treating the topic itself, the author normally scrutinizes the various proofs advanced in support of the topic. Kumarila will go directly to an examination of the proofs advanced in support of Yogacara's theory because they are the basis of examining even the objects themselves. Hence, addressing the *pramanas* first will necessarily entail a thorough consideration of the objects themselves and, for the sake of economy of effort and avoiding needless repetition, Kumarila goes straight to the heart of the matter.

will be made evident that even the Yogacarin perception will be proved as ineffectual as their inference. That is why, of the two, the author of the *Bhasya* proposes the following inference: "*Nanu...*" And coherence of this discussion of the Yogacarin inference with the foregoing discussion on Mimamsakas' perception is as follows:

20 **It has been stated by Jaimini that "perception is the knowledge born of the contact of senses with their respective objects"; however, (for Yogacarins) in reality there is no difference among sense, object and their mutual contact.**

21 **Perception characterized by contact of senses and their respective objects is merely imaginary and as such is also the case in dreams. Therefore it is difficult to draw any clear distinction between perceptions based on contact with objects and perceptions which have no object-contact as their basis.**

22 **As has been previously asserted by Mimamsa, falsity is two-fold and cannot be explained any other way[153]. But here it is being asserted (by Yogacarins) that all cognitions are characterized by falsity; so why (do you Mimamsakas) bother to distinguish the two?**

23 **The cognition of a pillar etc., is false because it is a cognition, because whatever is a cognition, has been seen to be false, like cognitions in a dream, etc..[154]**

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153 According to Mimamsa, falsity with regard to cognition is either due to a defect of the sense organ, i.e., a jaundice eye sees all objects as yellow, or because of a subsequent and stronger contradictory cognition, i.e., the rope that appeared to be a snake.

154 Yogacara's proposition is caste in the standard syllogistic form comprised of three limbs, *pratigya, hetu* and *udaharana* and the verse has been syntactically rearranged to reflect the syllogistic order.

24-25 The use of the word *eva* is in order to dismiss the charges of partial redundancy and absence of a proper instantiation leveled against the Yogacarin inference as proposed in the *Bhasya* because, if falsity would have been intended to be proved in all the cognitions (including even dreaming cognitions), the use of the word *eva* would have been purposeless. Therefore by the expression *sarva eva,* only waking cognitions are intended here (in this inference). Because of accepting a cognition's own parts as its supports, by the word *niralambana* in the Yogacarin inference, denial of only external supports is intended.[155]

26 The statement beginning with *pratyaya,* cognition, is the statement of the *hetu* as pervaded by the *sadhya,* and the *hetu* is correctly identified in the *upanaya* in the sentence which begins with *Jagrato'pi.*[156]

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155 Verses 24-5 involve a discussion based upon the Purvapaksa passage in the *Basya*: *"Nanu sarva eva niralambanah svapnavat pratyayah pratyayasyapi Niralambanatasvabhava upalakshitah svapne; Jagrato'pi stambha iti va Kudya iti va pratyaya eva bhavati; tasmat so'pi Niralambanah."*, which we translate as: **"All cognitions are without support like those in a dream; the nature of cognition as having no support is realized in dream ; even such notions of a waking person as 'it is a pillar' or 'it is a wall' are also cognitions and as such have no support."**

156 The conjectured criticism to which this verse responds is that the *purvapaksa* passage as presented in the *Basya* lacks a *hetu.* The *hetu* is usually expressed by means of the ablative case ending which is conspicuously absent in this verse. Kumarila vindicates the wording of the *Basya* by clarifying the order in which the syllogism appears. In so doing he makes the presence of the *hetu* quite obvious. The confusion here easily arises in view of the various ways in which the *avayavas* (members or limbs) of the Nyaya syllogism may be arranged. While the Nyaya formulation includes five limbs, Mimamsa employs only three, and Buddhism reduces it to merely two. To further complicate the matter, the three-fold presentation of Mimamsa can be either of Nyaya's first three limbs or last three limbs. Unless it is quite clear which procedure is being undertaken, it can be difficult to discern the logical unfolding of the sequence. Furthermore, it must be realized that the initial statement of the *purvapaksa* is not part of the syllogistic formulation; it is an introductory reiteration of the Yogacara *pratigya* (proposition) with an accompanying example. If one were to mistake this general recapitulation of Yogacara's proposition for the first limb of the syllogism, it would be difficult, indeed, to discern the presence of any *hetu,* the very matter that constitutes the formal problem addressed in this verse. In the *Basya,* according to Kumarila's reading, the author couches the syllogism in terms of the last three limbs of the Nyaya syllogistic formulation, *udaharana, upanaya and nigamana.*

Kumarila's task is to demonstrate the presence of the *hetu* in the syllogism. The first half of this verse calls attention to the role of the *hetu* in helping to establish the *vyapti.* The first half

27 Due to the absence of any *vipaksa* (negative exemplification, i.e. the instance of a place where the *hetu* is not found) in this case (the *vyapti* of this syllogism) the negative example is not mentioned. On account of the *pratyatva* in general (belonging to all cognitions) being proposed as the *hetu*, how could this *hetu* form a part of the *paksa*? [157]

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of this verse is a precise statement of the *vyapti*, i.e. the mention of the *hetu* as pervaded by the *sadhya*. Specifically applied to the syllogism, it indicates that the property of being a cognition *(the hetu)* is pervaded by the property of being without any corresponding external object as its support (the *sadhya*). The second half of the verse clearly reveals the reason *(hetu)* by means of the fourth limb of the Nyaya syllogistic formula, *upanaya*. *Upanaya* is the application of the *vyapti*, (the invariable concomitance established in the first half of the verse) to the present case, namely (waking cognitions). This is in strict accord with the role of the *upanaya* whose function it is to show the presence of the *hetu* in the *paksa* as qualified by the *vyapti*. If we were to construe the syllogism, as Kumarila suggests we do, using the last three members of the Nyaya syllogism, it would read as follows:

1. "All cognitions are without support, like dream cognitions." (*udaharana:* a statement of the invariable concomitance existing between the *hetu* and the *sadhya)* together with an example.
2. "Waking cognition is cognition." *(upanaya:* the application of the *hetu* to the *paksa*)
3. "Therefore, waking cognition is without any corresponding external objects as its support." (*nigamana:* conclusion*)*

For the sake of clarity we identify the constituent parts of the *pratigya* below:

1. Minor term *(paksa, substratum*, subject): "All (waking) cognitions"
2. Major term *(sadhya, probandum*, predicate): "are without corresponding external objects as their support."
3. Middle term *(hetu, probans*, reason): "the characteristic of being a cognition."

The limbs of the syllogism at issue in this verse are delineated below:

1. *Udaharana*- The character of being a cognition is (invariably concomitant with) possessing the character of having no corresponding external object as its support; e.g., dream cognitions.
2. *Upanaya*- Waking cognitions are a case of cognitions.
3. Nigamana- Therefore, waking cognitions are without support.

157 This verse anticipates and resolves two possible objections to the manner in which the *Basya* has presented Yogacara's case. The first half of the verse accounts for the omission of a statement of the negative *vyapti*. Although the *Basya* is not required to state the negative *vyapti* when one does not exist, it is characteristic of Kumarila to give every conceivable consideration to render the opponent's position accurately and thoroughly. Thus, if the inverse of the *vyapti* could be stated in order to buttress the Yogacarins' proposition, the author of the *Basya* might have done so. The negative version of the *vyapti* would have to include a negative example *(vipaksa)*, but no such example could be found. Therefore, a statement of the negative *vyapti* would not lend any support to Yogacara's proposition. Hence, its omission is not an oversight of the *Basya*. If the negative *vyapti* were to be stated, it would read: "Whatever is not *niralambana*, is not a cognition." It is obvious that no negative example could be provided which would fit the case. Whenever a *vyapti* is stated positively, it is accompanied by a *sapaksa* (positive example, i.e., an example from similarity). Correspondingly, whenever a *vyapti* is stated negatively, it must be accompanied by a *vipaksa* (negative example, i.e., an example from difference). For a more detailed treatment of this discussion see the translation and notes for verses 120-129.

The second half of the verse answers the possible objection that the *Basya* has presented Yogacara's *purvapaksa* devoid of a *paksadharmata*. The *paksadharmata* is the clear and

28-29 **The author of the *Bhasya* identifies *superniscaya* (decisive nature) as the particular characteristic of cognition in the waking state in order to prove the *salambanatva* (the property of having a support), but the concomitance of *superiniscaya* with external support is not proved for Yogacarins. Consequently, the answer given by the author of the *Bhasya* is either doubtful or contradictory.**[158]

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necessary indication of the presence of the *hetu* in the *paksa*. The *hetu*, it should be remembered here, is "the characteristic of being a cognition". The *paksa* in whose locus the *hetu* must be shown to be present is "All waking cognitions". The conjectured complaint here is that the two are identical. If the *hetu* is not different from the *paksa* it cannot establish the *paksadharmata* (the relationship of contained and container, pervaded and pervader, respectively). Inference can only be established when the *hetu*, as qualified by its invariable concomitance with the *sadhya*, is clearly shown to be present in the *paksa*. The *hetu* cannot be completely identical to the *paksa*, otherwise it could not be "present" in the *paksa*. Presence is a quality; it necessarily implies the relationship of two distinct things, one of which is pervaded by the other. In this second half of the verse Kumarila shows that the *Basya* has faithfully presented Yogacara's proposition with its *paksadharmata* in tact, at least formally. He does this by indicating that the *paksa* mentions "waking cognitions" specifically, whereas the *hetu* mentions "the characteristic of being a cognition" generally *(samanyasya)*. Thus the two are not identical and there remains at least the formal possibility for the establishment of a *paksadharmata*..

158 Although this passage concerns the *Siddhanta paksa* of the *Basya*, we have rendered it in **bold type** because, as we will contend, it implicitly represents the voice of the Yogacarins in criticism of the *Bhasya's Siddhanta paksa*. The argument here is subtle, the intricacy of which we believe is overlooked by B.K. Matilal's otherwise insightful treatment of verses 28-30 in *Perception: An Essay in Classical Indian Theories of Knowledge*, pp. 233-234.

Matilal presumes that Sabara attributes the two defects mentioned in verse 29 of "*Niralambanavada*" to the Yogacara's *purvapaksa* in the *Basya*. He writes, "Kumarila says that according to Sabara the above argument *(the purvapaksa of Yogacara presented in Sabara's Basya and outlined by Matitlal on page 233 of Perception)* can alternatively be identified as a *vikalpa-sama* or a *vaidharmya-sama* variety of sophistry." Matilal then offers a lucid explanation of these two defects as they would apply to Yogacara's *purvapaksa*. Matilal's explanation of these two defects is inapplicable however, because, as we will show, the defects only arise if the *purvapaksa* passage is misread. We will argue that it is the Yogacarin, not Sabara, who attributes the defects to Sabara's wording of the *Siddhanta paksa* of the Basya, and not to the *purvapaksa* at all. A more careful consideration of the verse in its context and relationship to the passages in the *Basya* reveals that Kumarila is fielding an anticipated criticism by the Yogacarins concerning the manner in which Sābara has presented the *Siddhantapaksa*. Yogacara's misreading and consequent criticism of Sabara's *Siddhanta paksa* is reflected in verses 28-29 of our translation.

The *Siddhantapaksa of the Bhasya* literally states: '*Stambha iti Jagrato buddhi superniccita katham viparyeshyati*' which we translate: "How can you (Yogacarins) think that the notion attested to by all waking people is mistaken when the notion of (something so obvious as) a pillar is of **a decisive nature?**"

Sabara's *Siddhanta paksa* intends only to establish the contradiction of *niralambana* by means of perception and other applicable *pramanas*, and not to establish the certainty (decisive nature) of waking cognitions. In verses 28-29 the Yogacarin argues that the author of the *Basya* has provided the property of being decisive as the reason for a cognition having support, i.e., being *salambana*. The Yogacarins think that the statement of the *Basya* is an inference in which

30 Some have suggested that because the Yogacarins' original thesis is defective, it should be answered with a defective reply;[159] others say that the *Siddhanta paksa* of the *Bhasya* has merely exposed a defect (in the Yogacarins' proposition) in the form of contradicting perception.

'superniccita' (decisive nature) refers to the hetu; however, according to Kumarila's reading, this is not the purport of the author of the *Basya*. Hence, Yogacara's criticism is based on their erroneous assumption that the *Basya* asserts a reason that is not beyond dispute, i.e., it is not acceptable to both parties. This lack of acceptability to both parties is expressed in the verse by the technical term *'vikalpsamata'* and is one of the 22 possible defects *(jati)* of debate as established in the *Nyaya Sutra*. The other defect referred to in the verse is *'vaidharmyasamata'* which constitutes an inconsistency if one differentiating property is inferred on the basis of another differentiating property involving a *vyapti* not beyond dispute by either party. The Yogacara's argument, which is based on a misreading of the *Siddhanta paksa*, maintains that, although the property of being a notion is common to all cognitions, including those of the waking as well as dreaming states, only some, not all, cognitions, even in the waking state, have the property of being decisive in nature *(supernicitta)*. Therefore only some of the waking cognitions would be proved as having support *(salambana)* but, those which are not decisive in nature, would not be established. Kumarila dismisses the criticism on the grounds that it is based upon a misreading of the *Basya*. According to Kumarila, the word *'supernicitta'*, as it appears in the *Siddhanta paksa* of the *Basya*, does not refer to the reason for inferring the *salambana* of cognitions, as the Yogacarins have supposed. Rather, as Kumarila will establish, *supernicitta* qualifies *pratyaksa* (perception), thereby indicating ascertainment of the decisive nature of cognitions by means of perception, i.e., *superniccita* is adjectival to *pratyaksa* and other *pramanas* that are instrumental for properly investigating the nature of external objects. And, it is not proposed to assert or establish the *salambana* of cognitions. Our reading is in keeping with Kumarila's intention, expressed in verse 18, to examine by means of inferential reasoning whether or not objects exist. Moreover, he announces in verse 18 that he takes this tact in his text and dismisses the examination of the objects themselves. Our reading is consistent with Kumarila's expressed purpose and procedure of his project in *Niralambanavada*. Our stance is further corroborated by verse 11's emphatic pronouncement of the text's purpose to refute Yogacara's notion that the fruits of action are not different from the pleasures of a dream. It is not the mission of Sabara's *Bhasya*, nor the burden of *Niralambanavada*, to establish what, as far as Mimamsakas are concerned, is already universally attested to by common sense, namely the real existence of external objects. The firm establishment of the existence of external objects is announced in the conclusion of the succeeding chapter, *Sunyavada*, but the expressed method and aim of *Niralambanvada* is primarily refutation.

We agree with Jha's translation of verses 28-29 in so far as his rendering indicates that the defects are attributed to Sabara's *siddhantapaksa*. However, it appears that Jha understands the criticism as coming from Kumarila. On the contrary we have contended that Kumarila does not criticize, but vindicates Sabara's wording of the *siddhantapaksa*.

159 The sense of this verse is that some say that the Yogacara's criticism should not be dignified with a serious response, i.e., "a fool should be answered according to his folly." However, Kumarila avoids this tact as it would involve two *ucta jaties*, namely *paryanuyojyanuyoga* and *niranuyojyanuyoga*, the failure to issue a coherent and adequate response respectively.

31 When we will have conclusively repudiated the Yogacarins' notion of the cognition having internal content, then, rejecting content in general, your (Yogacarins') stance will be that cognitions are purely contentless.

32 After eliminating the internal contents of cognition like perception, etc., only external content remains. Thus, by means of such external content the proposition of the Yogacarin which denies the external object as content of cognition is contradicted.[160]

33 For lack of any subsequent contradictory cognition, no fallacious *pramana* can be shown to exist, hence the author of the *Bhasya* employs the term "decisive nature" in order to convey the superior power of the contradictory cognitions.[161]

34 Rejection is justified only of such an object which has been grasped by means of a defective cognition; however, if you Yogacarins just reject everything known, then even your own theory could not be established.

35 Due to the Yogacarin notion that external objects cannot be grasped distinctly by any cognition because of its being contentless, either the *paksa* or the *sadhya*[162] of

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160 *Paksabadhanam* which we render 'contradiction by means of perception' in this context includes all of the *pramanas* applicable to establishing the contradiction, beginning with perception, but also including inference and verbal testimony.

161 Kumarila defends Sabara's word choice by arguing that the *Bhasya* intends to indicate something more by expressing *pratyaksa* etc., (perception and their applicable *pramanas*) by the word *supernicitta*. Specifically, by engaging the term *supernicitta*, the *Bhasya* intends to point out that the *pramanas* are stronger than the inferential reasoning proposed by Yogacara because Yogacara's inference involves defects, but *pratyaksas* have no defects, so they serve to refute the Yogacara's proposition and render it self-contradictory.

A second anticipated objection is also resolved in this verse. One may object that even if something is 'well ascertained' *(supernicitta)*, it may be proved wrong by a subsequent cognition. However, as Kumarila demonstrates here, Yogacara fails to provide any subsequent contradictory perception; consequently, the *pramana* is not fallacious.

their proposition, or both, are not well known to exist; therefore the Yogacarin's proposition is wrong.

36 There will be a contradiction of their own statement lacking a corresponding external object of the knowledge of the *paksa* and *sadhya* as present in the mind of the speaker and listener.

37 And, then there is no possibility[163] of difference between the *sadhya* and the *paksa*; therefore, the statement of the proposition is not appropriate.[164]

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162 *Visosanavisosyayoh* indicates the qualifier and qualificand respectively. The former is primary and the later is secondary for arriving at philosophical distinctions in Sanskrit grammatical discussion. Hence three possible defects may be incurred.

163 Sambhavo, origin or source.

164 According to Yogacara there is no difference between a cognition and its object, but the Mimamsaka maintains that both cognitions and their objects are real and have independent existence. Therefore a distinction can be clearly drawn between them; however, Yogacara can make no such distinction. Accordingly Mimamsakas can prove the existence of external objects by means of valid cognitions, whereas Yogacarins cannot prove anything by means of valid cognitions because, according to them, nothing exists apart from the cognitions themselves. Therefore, Kumarila demonstrates that Yogacara's proposition establishes nothing at all and as such is bankrupt of any intelligible meaning. Cognition, in itself, is abstract and, as such, possesses no property by means of which differentiation can be discerned; however, concrete cognitions can be distinguished from each other. According to the Mimamsakas the differentiating property of cognition is the difference which exists between particular objects, but for the Yogacarins, because of their doctrine of *niralambana*, it is impossible to distinguish one cognition from another. The difference in substratum between one cognition and another makes differentiation easy for the Mimamsaka, i.e., the cognition inherent in the speaker is different from that in the listener. Kumarila's point is that the cognition inherent in the speaker, who wants to explain his cognition, cannot be distinguished from the cognition inherent in the listener. For the establishment of any inferential proposition, two elements are required, a substratum and probandum, i.e. *paksa* and *sadhya*. If all cognitions are, as the Yogacarin maintains, equally non-existent, there can be no relation between the subject and predicate, nor between the speaker and listener. Subject, predicate, and their relation constitute three distinct cognitions, none of which the Yogacarin can distinguish from the others. For a statement to make sense, both subject and predicate are essential constituents and cannot be the same. The only element by means of which cognitions can be differentiated is an object, the very nature of which Yogacara denies. When a participant in a debate speaks, it is the responsibility of the speaker to satisfactorily explain the statement; the Yogacarin fails to do so. The particular logical defect here is one of the three types of *sabdavirodha*, specifically termed *ubhyaya*. It is the case of both subject and predicate being self contradictory by means of negation.

38 **In fact *niralambanata* is not understood by us Yogacarins as a real object, therefore the question regarding difference and non-difference does not even arise.**[165]

39 If, as you Yogacarins insist, *niralambanata* is not real, how do you wish to explain it to us Mimamsakas, and how do you Yogacarins understand it according to your own theory of reality?

On the contrary, we Yogacarins establish *niralambanata* as an imaginary mental construct.

40 What sort of imaginary mental construction is that which happens to be non-existent? If it is an imaginary mental construct, then it is something existent.

On the contrary, how then do you (Mimamsakas) accept negation (*abhava*), which is non-existent, as an object of cognition?

Ah!, but even that, *abhava* (negation), as we will soon demonstrate, exists![166]

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165 The purport of Yogacara's rejoinder is that since, according to them, nothing apart from cognition is real, the question of these illusory properties being different from each other is not a warranted criticism.

166 This *sloka* moves back and forth from Mimamsa's ridicule to the Yogacarin's rejoinder and concludes with Mimamsa's promise to settle the score in what will follow. Here is a case where translation inevitably fails to make the impact of the original text. The discussion hinges on the debaters' handling of the terms *vastu* and *abhave*, terms the understanding of which vary between the two parties concerned. According to Kumarila, *abhave* (negation) is *vastu* (really existent). Yogacara believes, on the other hand, that *abhave* (negation) is not *vastu* (a real existent). According to Yogacara a *vastu* is, by definition, positive in nature. As far as Kumarila is concerned, if something is *avastu* (not really existent), it cannot exist in cognition. If, on the other hand, something exists in cognition, it must be *vastu* (really existent). On this basis then, Kumarila ridicules the Yogacarin's notion of *kalpita* (supposition) because Kumarila holds that a supposition is actually a superimposition of something which necessarily exists somewhere. Accordingly, if *niralambana* existed somewhere, it could be rightly supposed to belong to a cognition, but, even by Yogacara's own admission, it does not exist anywhere, therefore, it cannot be supposed to exist even in a cognition.

41 So also, this term *pratyaya* (cognition) may stand for either the object of the act of cognizing, or the act of cognizing, or the agent who cognizes, or the instrument by means of which the act of cognizing occurs. Accepting any one of the last three possible derivations would involve a contradiction in Yogacarins' attempt to establish their theory of *niralambanatata*. If, on the other hand, the term is taken to mean the object of the act of cognizing, it would involve the defect of redundancy, attempting to prove that which has already been accepted even by the opponent.

42 It would involve a redundancy since that which is being cognized is already accepted by us Mimamsakas as *niralambana*, because color and such things, on account of not possessing the property of being of the nature of cognition, do not require anything as their *alambana!*

43 On accepting the term *pratyaya* as standing for either the agent or instrument of cognition, the property of being the subject of the Yogacarin proposition would belong even to these two words themselves and, because of their not possessing any *alambana*, the Yogacarins' proposition would fail to convey any meaning whatsoever.

44 And without having something different from the cognition itself to be cognized, there remains the impossibility of accepting the word *pratyaya* as standing for either the agent or instrument of the act of cognition. Whether the term *pratyaya* refers to the act of cognition, or to its cause, your own statement stands contradicted.

45 If *pratyaya* is taken in its conventional denotation, even then your view is not proved because, to us (Mimamsakas), something which grasps another thing is proved to be a *pratyaya*.

46 If, having accepted cognition as that which grasps something other than itself, you propose *pratyaya* as the subject of your proposition, then the view you have previously accepted is contradicted. And the subject is disproved because *salambana pratyatva* is not acceptable to you (Yogacarins). If on the other hand, you propose *niralambana pratyatva* as the subject, then also the subject is disproved because it is not acceptable to us (Mimamsakas).

47 Even upon accepting *pratyaya* as a property belonging to *Atman* or something existing independently, the defect previously pointed out would still remain. There is nothing which can be called merely *pratyaya* because it cannot be specified.

48 For others there is a precise description in the form of the mere meaning of *sabda*. On the other hand it is not possible for you (Yogacarins) to establish any particular positive meaning of the word *pratyaya* in your proposition.[167]

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167 The context of the argument here involves the Mimamsakas' proposition: "*sabdaha nitya*" (Sound is eternal). The verse may be read as Kumarila's response to Yogacara's implicit complaint that Mimamsakas are unreasonable in attributing so narrow a scope to the *paksatavachedika*. The hypothetical criticism lodged by Yogacara here is that Mimamsakas propose *sabda* without any reference to its qualities or properties and then predicate its eternality in just the same way that Yogacara has proposed *pratyaya*, without reference to any property, and then predicates its *niralambanata*. But, Kumarila argues that the case is not at all the same. For in the case of the proposition regarding sound, though Realists differ concerning which properties are ascribed to it, e.g., whether it is a quality or a substance, and whether its modality is air or ether, all Realists agree that sound is specified by its particular qualities. The substratum of the Mimamsakas' proposition is the 'meaning' of the word *sabda* and not *sabda* itself. While the distinction is subtle, it is crucial to understanding the difference between the two propositions. The word 'fire' does not burn; fire burns. In the same manner the word *sabda* makes no sound; its verbal utterance does. Hence the substratum of Mimamsa's proposition is the meaning of the word *sabda*, inherent in which are its specifying properties; whereas the substratum of the Yogacarins' proposition attributes no specifying characteristics whatsoever to the word *pratyaya*.

49 And, even if in regard to Yogacara's proposition *niralambanata* is being inferred in every respect, such a proposition involves the defects of the *sadhya* not being well known and a proper example does not exist.

50 Even if *niralambanata* is being inferred in only some respects, the proposition involves the defect of trying to establish what is already accepted by the opponent because the cognition of taste is devoid of color and all other such properties that cannot be tasted.

51 If only that *alambana* which gives shape to the cognition is denied, that very denial is a contradiction of their own stance because of Yogacara having accepted the self-shaping nature of cognition.

52 Even upon accepting external objects in general as not being the *alambana* of cognitions, if Yogacara insists on expressing *niralambanata* by the word 'external' in general, they only assert what no one disputes because we Mimamsakas do not at all predicate the externality of an object in general as *salambanata*, rather, we specify such things as pillars to be the external objects of cognition.

Thus, the two cases are not parallel, and do not justify Yogacara's unspecified assertion of *pratyaya*. For the Yogacarin, cognition has no inherent properties; they are all superimposed. Consequently, Yogacara is incapable of identifying which properties of cognition are *paksata* and which are *paksatavacchedaka*, identifications without which *pratyaya* cannot be logically established as a *paksa* in the Yogacara proposition.

According to the Mimamsakas', the primary meaning of a word is the universal, which is the essential quality common to the particular instances of the class. It is admitted that while cognition of the meaning brought about by the word pertains to the universal, all practical activity that follows the word pertains to the particular. But, the primary relation of the word must be to the universal.

53 If *niralambanata* is asserted by Yogacarins in the form of not having as its content a pillar and other such specified external objects, which are commonly known to exist, then on account of such cognitions possessing the property of being seen by everyone, a contradiction arises.

54. If, with regard to the perception of a double moon, Yogacarins argue that such a perception is equal to the perception of a pillar and other such objects by virtue of there having been seen, and that by implication we Mimamsakas should consistently apply this principle in criticism of our own assertion of *nalambana* regarding the double moon, we beg to differ because our (Mimamsaka's) assertion of *nalambana* with regard to the double moon is on account of the absence of any connection between the sense organs and the double moon, and not on account of the absence of the cognition of the object, namely, the double moon.

55 For us Mimamsakas, regarding the occurrence of all perceptual cognitions, whether those cognitions are instrumental for grasping something existing (*salambanata*) or non-existing (*niralambanata*), is determined by whether or not there is any connection between the senses and objects.

56 But according to you Yogacarins, on account of the absence of the sense organs, the objects and their mutual connection, apart from the cognition there would be nothing else instrumental for proving or disproving the *alambana*; therefore the denial is not justified.

57 If you Yogacarins intend somehow to prove that a cognition has no external object as its *alambana* (support or basis) this proposition is beyond intelligibility

because, according to you Yogacarins, external objects are not well known to exist.

58 As the *sadhya* not having been well established beforehand on account of its absence of power to make another thing known, the establishment of the *paksa* would not be possible, similarly when the attribute of the *sadhya* is not proved beforehand the establishment of the *sadhya* would not be possible.

59 On account of the property of having the meaning of words as its cause, when the meaning of words is not properly known, the meaning of the sentence is not properly understood. And it will be established that the subject carries the meaning of the sentence.

60 Either upon accepting the negative particle as *paryudasa (*conveying a positive meaning*)* or *nisedha (*conveying a negative meaning*)* of the object different from cognition, you would only establish what is already accepted by everyone. Because, on the basis of merely being knowable, the whole world possesses the property of non-difference.

61 If the property of being *nirlambana* means not to have any *alambana* totally different from the cognition, then your previous stance would be contradicted by what is proposed now.

62 And if the cognition is desired to be proved as having no *alambana* (external objective basis) even in the shape of a thing, etc., the defect of trying to establish what is already accepted by us is inevitable. If you Yogacarins intend to establish the non-difference of that which is to be grasped from that which is instrumental

for grasping, then the two different capacities accepted in the same cognition are contradictory.

63 If the production of a *niralambana* (externally objectless) cognition is intended to be proved by the Yogacarins' proposition, then production of such a cognition is desired, in part, even by us Mimamsakas with the difference that such cognitions would be devoid of external objects to be grasped, and therefore is erroneous.

64 However, you Yogacarins can in no way establish the validity of this *niralambana* of cognition because this *niralambana* of cognition is culminated in respect to itself[168]; so all cognitions are like the water of a mirage.

65-66 Since *niralambana* characterized by the cognitions of *caitra,* etc.,[169] is not proved by means of the cognition born of reason, (inference), therefore, due to a plurality of objects,[170] there can be no rejection of external objects by any stronger opposite cognition; so by what means do you Yogacarins imagine the repudiation of the

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168 *Atmansoavasita*, it is finished in respect to itself, i.e. the cognition does not transcend itself or refer beyond itself to anything else.

169 Caitra, etc.- *caitra* is a proper name; *caitra,* etc., refers to cognitions of external objects.

170 We translate *visayananatva* literally as "plurality of objects". This expression is to be understood in contradistinction to *eka visayata*, "one common object" by means of which a contradiction is conceivable. Contradiction of a cognition by means of "a subsequent stronger opposite" *(pratiyogyaniraktra)* cognition can occur only when both cognitions are concerned with one and the same object. The principle which Kumarila invokes here is *Bhasya babhaka bhava* which is the relation between that which contradicts and that which is contradicted. Such contradiction of one cognition by another depends upon *eka visayata, i.e.,* having one and the same object concerned. Yogacara's proposition is concerned with only such cognitions as grasp themselves. It has nothing whatsoever to do with cognitions of external objects. Kumarila rejects the very ground on which Yogacara might attempt to establish a contradiction between their *niralambana* cognitions and the Realist's cognitions. Kumarila asks, "When your proposition concerning cognitions is concerned with something altogether different from our cognitions, there being no common object on the basis of which to apply a stronger opposite cognition, how can you reject the *salambana* of external objects which is proved by the very nature of the objects concerned?"

real establishment of the *salambana*, (objective support), which is proved by the very nature of the cognition of external objects?

67 Even if the word *pratyaya* (cognition) itself distinct from its actual referent, i.e., cognition itself, is understood by *pratyaya* in the Yogacara proposition, then the property of being the external support of cognition is rejected within such a use of the word *pratyaya* itself. Then the defect of attempting to prove what is already accepted by the opponent occurs.

68 If the capacity to produce a *niralambana* cognition is denied in the Yogacara proposition, then that which is intended to be established, namely, *niralambanata* is not proved. Furthermore, without *pratyaya* possessing the property of being instrumental for making something known, the use of the *hetu* here in your inference cannot be not justified..

69 Without difference between a word and its meaning, the principle of relation cannot be established between a word and its meaning, and that relation cannot exist without difference[171]. And that difference between word and meaning will

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171 *Bheda* signifies "difference" however, it is not the particular difference between a word and its meaning as was previously indicated in the verse by *abhidha*. Rather, it implies that principle of difference by means of which a particular type of cause is established. Nyaya logicians identify two distinct types of cause, *jnatasat* and *svarupasat*. The former is that cause which is effective only if it is known and not merely by its presence, whereas the latter is effective even by its mere presence, whether it is known or not. Kumarila appeals to *jnatsat* in establishing the logical implication here, i.e., for a word to convey its meaning the difference between the word and its meaning must be cognized. A further implication of this difference is that if the Yogacarin grants any meaning whatsoever to the word *pratyaya*, they will have to concede that there is at least one more type of cognition (other than the only one they have thus far granted, i.e., cognition as a support to itself) that serves as *alambana* to cognition, namely, a meaning is the *alambana* of the word it signifies. Hence, as Kumarila will state in verse 71, the Yogacarins are compelled to either abandon their initial proposition or suffer the dire consequence of maintaining two absolutely contradictory propositions, namely: "All waking cognitions are *niralambana*", and "Words express meaning."

not be effective without the cognition manifesting that difference between those two, word and meaning.[172]

[It is therefore necessary even for the Yogacarins to accept difference between a word and its meaning to make their proposition expressive of its desired meaning, otherwise...]

70-71 because the members of the syllogism, namely the *paksa*, *hetu*, and example, and the proponent and opponent have not been clearly identified by the mediator[173], use of supporting reason would not be possible. If you say you accept words expressive of their meaning, then such a proposition is contradicted simply by what has been accepted by you before.[174]

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172 There is an inseparable four-link chain of reason delineated here by Kumarila. Any particular relation depends on the general principle of relation. This general principle of relation depends upon the principle of difference which, in turn, is dependent upon knowing (cognizing) the particular difference. Hence, the difference between word and meaning, (if admitted by Yogacara), proves that there is such a cognition which is instrumental for knowing that difference. *A* can be said to be different from *B* only if two distinct cognitions are known, namely *A* and *B*. Word, meaning and the cognition consequent upon one's knowledge of their relation constitute three discrete dimensions of a word which are easily obscured in verbal expression. In verses 68-69 Kumarila drives an inseparable wedge of logic between the three distinct features inherent in the use of *word*.

173 *Prasinakais*, literally the one who possess the question. The format of the sort of debate reflected in this treatise is initiated by a mediator who presents the issue under consideration to the audience in an impartial manner. The import of Kumarila's point is that so long as a Yogacarin maintains the incapacity of words to express meaning, the mediator would neither be capable of discerning the limbs of the syllogism, nor distinguishing the opponent from the proponent of the debate. Upon hearing the negative verbal expressions of the contestants, the mediator is responsible for identifying to the audience which party in the debate is proponent and which is the opponent. Upon hearing Yogacara's proposition that words are meaningless, the mediator would be constrained to disqualify the Yogacarin before the debate even begins. G.P. Bhatt observes a further implication of these verse in his treatment of them on page 47 of *The Basic Ways of Knowing* where he writes: "Moreover, an argument is employed when there is a discussant (*vadi*) who employs the argument and an opponent (*prativadi*) against whom it is employed. Thus in the very attempt to prove his thesis by inference the idealist presupposes the independent existence of the realist whom he cognizes as external to him, which contradicts his theory that all cognitions apprehend themselves and not any external object."

174 Abandonment of their initial proposition is a nigrastana known as *pratijnahani*.

72-73 Since the difference between merit and demerit, etc., and between the student and the teacher[175] has not been established by you Yogacarins, then the teaching of merit, etc., cannot be justified. But, on account of practicing the teaching of merit, etc. the difference of cognitions is desirable and on account of difference having been accepted by the Buddha in other *sutras*[176], there would be contradiction of Yogacara's proposition by the *Agamas*[177].

74-75 And by means of what is well known by everyone in the entire world, in this regard there would certainly be contradiction of your (Yogacara's) proposition. And all cognitions of the waking state that are intended to be proved as *niralambana*, if such cognitions are desired by you Yogacarins to be false, then the absence of all propositions that the Yogacarin may wish to establish would be devoid of proof. And if you Yogacarins accept the cognition represented by your proposition to be false, then deficiency may be expressed by me, Kumarila, any way I wish (i.e., from every angle). If you Yogacarins accept the *salambana* of those cognitions that are instrumental for the proper establishment of the *hetu*, there would certainly be an inconsistency of those cognitions.

76 If the proposition is of such a *pratyatva* as the *hetu* which is different from what is common to the cognition of grasping *trirupya* of the *hetu*, then whether the

175 *Sisyatmano*, literally the taught and oneself, i.e. disciple and master.

176 *Sutrantare* refers to other *sutras* particularly those accepted by the Sautrantikas and Vaibhasikas who, though also Buddhists, are realists who accept the principle of difference and consequently the reality of the external word as enunciated by Buddha in other *sutras*, particularly the *Agamas*.

177 *Agamabadhanam* is a *tatpurusa* compound that may be read as either a genitive or an instrumental. We have rendered it as an instrumental *tatpurusa* in order to convey the *Agamas* as the stronger component which contradicts the weaker, i.e. Yogacara's proposition. Had we rendered it as the genitive *tatpurusa* the contradiction would have given primacy to the Yogacara proposition, i.e., the Yogacara proposition would be understood as the stronger component by means of which the *Agamas* would stand contradicted.

cognition grasping difference of the *hetu* is false or true? If it occurs to be false, then all that has been stated before by you (Yogacarins) would not be justified.

77-78 Thus, the difference between the cognition of a pole, etc., and the cognition of the *hetu* will not be possible in that way. Wherever this proposition that it is cognized as different from those three cognitions instrumental for the proper establishment of the *hetu*, in all such cases there would be contradiction of the difference because of the falsehood of the cognition of the opponent (Yogacarin), namely contradiction of two opposite reasons belonging to the same *locus*[178] or contradiction of the weaker proposition by the stronger[179]

79-80 By whatever alternative you Yogacarins try to establish your stance, a counter-reason has to be stated by us Mimamsakas, namely the cognition that has an external object as its *alambana* (external object, support), and this cognition is valid because it is devoid of contradiction (i.e., it is literally "bereaved" of any subsequent contradictory cognition), for example, the waking cognition that contradicts dream cognitions etc.[180] If even that waking cognition that contradicts

178 *Viruddhavyabhicaritvam*, literally the absence of inconsistency, i.e. there would occur that which is consistent with the opposite. This technical term for contradiction involves the contradiction of two equally strong proposed reasons. Even if Kumarila does not establish his proposition as stronger than Yogacara's, the failure of Yogacara to establish the relative superiority of their reason constitutes an inadequacy in the reason advanced.

179 *Badho vapyanumanatah* is the technical designation of the contradiction that involves opposition between a relatively weaker and stronger proposition. Kumarila suggests hereby that his own proposition is stronger than Yogacara's by virtue of the fact that Kumarila's *hetu* does not lack the three requisite characteristics for establishing a proper *hetu*. If the *hetu* is not present in the entire substratum (i.e., if Yogacara proposes a *hetu* excluding the three requisite characteristics), the defect known as *hetuasiddhi* (non-establishment of reason) occurs.

180 *Adi* (etc.) envisions all other cognitions that are contradicted by subsequent decisive cognitions. Included in this category may be delusions, mirages and other altered states of consciousness that are subsequently shown to be invalid, i.e., lacking any corresponding reality as their support.

dream cognition, etc., is said to be false, then because of the non-contradiction of the dream cognition etc., the dream cognition would have to be regarded as valid.

81-82 Therefore there is there is no positive example in support of your reason. So also if the cognitions of existence, difference and momentariness, etc., are accepted by you (Yogacarins) as valid, then there would be inconsistency. And by accepting[181] the invalidity of those cognitions of existence, difference and momentariness, contradiction of your theory occurs.

83 Thus, differentiation between one who is bound and one who is emancipated, etc.,[182] is not established. And therefore the futility of your effort for attaining *moksa* occurs.

84 If the cognition of existence, difference, and momentariness of cognition is regarded by you (Yogacarins) as invalid, on account of their being produced with variety[183], then as has been seen regarding these (i.e. existence, difference and momentariness) there is no other *pramana* by means of which the existence, difference and momentariness of your cognition could be proved.

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181 The root *bhy* contained in *abhyupapattai* denotes "forcefulness". Hence we may construe the statement as Yogacara's violent imposition of the invalidity of the three aforementioned cognitions.

182 *Adi* (etc.) encompasses all cases of difference between any two things.

183 *Vikalpopahyamana*, being generated by variety, where variety infers the threefold characteristic of cognition as possessing the property of existence, difference and momentariness. *vikalpopapahyamana* is an adjective of apposition qualifying *dhi* (cognition) which designates a causal relation between the two terms. Hence the property of being produced with variety is the cause for the invalidity of the cognition. It is presumed here that Yogacara denies validity to such cognitions by virtue of their being *savikalpa*, tainted or corrupted by linguistic predication. Yogacarins accept the absolute reality only of cognitions which are *nirvikalpa*, consisting of only the pure, raw, pre-linguistic sense data. Since cognitions characterized by the qualities of existence, difference and momentariness are *savikalpa*, they are not absolutely real, *parartha*, but false, *mithya*.

85 Therefore, in the absence of *pramanas*, it is difficult to establish the existence, difference and momentariness of cognition. And, even all cognitions of ours Mimamsakas', and all the cognitions of other realist schools would be invalid on account of variety of their content, including existence, difference and momentariness.

86-87 Furthermore, nearness and distance as well as existence and non-existence would be difficult to establish. Thus, when the concepts of all the philosophical systems are false without any discrimination, then exempting the Samkhya and others' concepts, favor is not justified of only one Buddhist philosophy.[184] If invalidity of cognition be accepted, as you (Yogacarins) hold, why is contradiction of that cognition not available?[185]

88-91a If that invalidity of waking cognition is accepted even without any subsequent contradiction, differentiation between validity and invalidity would not be established. To us (Mimamsakas) invalidity of dream cognitions, hallucinations and all other false cognitions may be established by virtue of the realization of a subsequent contradictory cognition of the waking state. But by what means can you Yogacarins differentiate between valid and invalid cognitions? Of the cognitions of the waking state, there is no other proper contradictory cognition by means of which the invalidity of waking cognitions of pole etc., would be

[184] Kumarila puts tongue in his cheek, drawing out the implication regarding all cognitions as equally false. The propositions of all schools of thought, including Yogacara, would have to be regarded as equally false. Kumarila jibes the Yogacarins for desiring that their doctrine alone be favorably accepted. Such privileged status is ridiculous when the cognitions (and thereby propositions) of all schools are regarded to be equally false.

[185] Kumarila poses the rhetorical question: "How can you Yogacarins hold the invalidity of a cognition when no subsequent contradictory cognition is ever found?

established. It is well known to everyone throughout the entire world that waking cognitions contradict dream cognitions, including hallucinations and all other such cognitions which are contradicted by stronger subsequent cognitions, on account of waking cognitions possessing the characteristic of being opposite to dream cognitions, etc., as for example contradictory cognitions.[186]

91b-93a **A cognition is generated in yogins that is contradictory and opposite to the waking cognitions of a pole, etc. Therefore similarity between waking cognitions and dream cognitions is proved. And so, when all living beings will have reached that yogic state, this contradiction will occur, therefore the property of having an opposite and contradictory cognition is established.**

93b-96a For the time being, in this birth, no such cognition is available in any ordinary being. However, we do not know what will happen concerning those living beings who might have reached the yogic state. And our yogins may have a contradictory cognition either partially or totally opposite to what you have said will occur. And there is no example of the type of your yogins' cognitions. But that example which is experienced by us (Mimamsakas) and other realists does exist.

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186 It should be observed that Kumarila asserts in this verse what the Yogacarins erroneously presumed Sabara to assert in the *siddhantapaksa* of his *Bhasya* treated in verses 28-29. Here, however Kumarila's wording carefully avoids the defective reasoning of which Sabara is falsely accused by the Yogacarins. The import of this verse still maintains the non-necessity of establishing what is universally acknowledged by common sense experience! Nevertheless, Kumarila advances a reason in support of the validity of some waking cognitions and provides an example which is beyond dispute even to the Yogacarin, namely, contradictory cognitions (i.e., subsequent opposite and stronger waking cognitions that contradict even erroneous waking cognitions).

96b-97a Here, we Yogacarins say that the cognition of a pole and all other waking cognitions possess the property of having opposite and contradictory cognitions by virtue of their being cognitions, like the cognition of water in a mirage.

97b-98 The fact that cognitions of water in a mirage, etc., possess the property of having an opposite contradictory cognition is also desired by us (Mimamsakas). And the same holds even if you propose that the cognition in the form of a mirage is contradicted due merely to having an object that is grasped. And, even if you accept yogic cognitions as instrumental for contradicting waking cognitions, your reasoning is inconsistent. And, if you wish to qualify your premise by including only such contradictory cognitions other than yogic cognitions, then you incur all of the same defects as previously.[187]

99-100 For you Yogacarins, just as in a dreaming cognition, even so in waking cognitions, the properties of having opposite and false, contradictory cognition would be inherent. And therefore, the property of being contradictory, accepted in the yogic conniptions, will disprove all those particularities, like the cognition of being caused by the relation of destruction of attachment and so on. Or, we can propose an inference to prove waking cognitions valid by virtue of non-contradiction now as experienced by great souls, just like you propose your so called contradictory cognitions of yogins.

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187 In order to exempt yogic cognitions from their premise, Yogacara will have to establish the difference between yogic cognitions and all other cognitions. In order to establish this difference, they will have to appeal to a cognition by means of which the difference can be ascertained. The impossibility of consistently establishing this differentiating cognition has been thoroughly treated in verse 76. Therefore, Kumarila does not reiterate the argument here, but simply alludes to the previous discussion.

101 Thus, either the contradiction of your inference has to be stated, or a counter reason has to be proposed by us (Mimamsakas). And the earlier defects applicable to your reason must be remembered now.

102 On account of your *hetu* being inexpressible and identical to your *sadhya*, your *hetu* is not acceptable to both parties. The universal named *pratyatva* does not exist according to you (Yogacarins) either as totally different[188] from the individual or as identical[189] to the individual.

103-104a And, such a universal that is totally different from the individual does not exist anyhow for you (Yogacarins), or in my (Kumarila's) system. And, as we will establish later, a universal is neither similarity nor is it the rejection of what is different from the individual.[190]

104b-105a The *pratyatva* in particular that is existent only in the *paksa*, or the *pratyatva* existent only in the example, cannot be proposed as a proper reason. Therefore the *hetu* proposed as a universal is not a proper reason because it is not acceptable to both parties.[191] Nor can the *pratayatva* limited to waking cognitions, or limited to dreaming cognitions, be proposed as the reason because

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188 The Nyayakas hold that the universal and individual are two separate and real entities.

189 With only a slight qualification, the Mimamsakas accept the non-difference between the universal and the particular.

190 The Yogacarins may argue that they do not accept either view of universals but accept either the idea of similarity or *apoha*. *Apoha* indicates difference from all that is not that. This is the negative explanation of the universals of other systems. Kumarila will treat *sarupyanani* and *vrtti* in section 16, *akritivada*, and 17, *apohavada*, respectively. The property of universal will be shown to be neither similarity nor *apoha*.

191 Since Yogacarins do not accept universals, it is inappropriate for them to appeal to the principle of universals as their reason.

the former is existent only in the *paksa*, whereas the later is only in the example[192] because the former is devoid of positive concomitance and the later is not an attribute to the *paksa*.

105b-106 Nor could that cognition devoid of any object to be grasped be proposed as a proper reason.[193] On account of the non-establishment of that which is qualified, i.e., the *paksa*, as stated previously,[194] the inference incurs the defect of having a *paksa* unproved. So also the *hetu* is contradictory to the *sadhya* and the example is devoid of the *sadhya*.

107 In the example made known only by means of proposing an alternative in the form of the non-establishment of the qualification, the defect of being devoid of *sadhya* follows because, even in dreaming cognitions and such erroneous cognitions which occur in the waking state, external objects are not regarded by us (Mimamsakas) to be altogether absent.

108-109a In all erroneous cognitions, whether waking or dreaming, there is *alambana* because objects are grasped as having a connection with space and time otherwise than where they are present. So also, the objects grasped in a dream are

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192 The first particular form of *pratyatva*, i.e., cognitions of the waking state is available only with the *paksa* (*paksasamsthayoh*). A proper reason must be available in both the *paksa* and *dristanta*. This is the reason for not accepting the first alternative, i.e., waking cognitions only, as a valid reason. *Tattulyasamsthayoh* is the reason for not accepting the second alternative, i.e., cognitions of the dreaming state only, because such cognitions are not present in the *paksa* which includes only waking cognitions.

193 The second half of verse 105 envisions yet a fourth alternative conceivably proposed by the Yogacarin for understanding the meaning of the word *pratyatva* as the *hetu*, namely the *pratyatva* which occurs in our minds when we hear the word *pratyatva* uttered. Kumarila summarily dismisses this fourth alternative and provides the reason in the verses that follow.

194 See *Niralambanavada*, verse 46 and following.

either of this lifetime or a previous one, at the proper or improper place, but improper time.[195]

109b-112 The erroneous cognition of the firebrand appearing as a circle is due to its association with the rapid reeling movement, not as we experience it. The erroneous cognition of the city of the demigods is due to mistaking the clouds in the shape of houses, buildings and components of a city seen here on earth before. So also, in the erroneous cognition of water in a mirage, the sandy ground heated by the rays of the sun and the water experienced before are accepted as its cause (*alambana*).[196] In the erroneous cognition of the hare's horn, the horns of other animals and the very form of the hare itself (i.e., its pointed ears or perhaps raised tufts of hair), are the causes (*alambanas*). And the cause (*alambana*)of cognition of negation of hare's horn is the absence of horns, (baldness), on the hare's head. Even in the cognition of emptiness,[197] the cause is the presence of things disconnected from other things expected to have been seen.

113a In the erroneous cognitions of the meanings of false statements, various objects intended to be understood thereby are the causes (*alambanas*).

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195 The question to which Kumarila responds here is: if dream cognitions have *alambana*, why are they regarded as erroneous? The purport of this section is that even cognitions of the dreaming state also have contents, but the contents are mistaken in point of time and or space. The place might sometimes even be correct, but never the time.

196 Error may include an admixture of reality and falsehood. It is the undue association of two real things. Such errors may be the consequence of any one or more of several factors, insufficient light, distance, a defect in the sense organ, etc.

197 Kumarila asserts that even the notion of *sunyata* is not entirely devoid of *alambana*. In the case of an empty pot, the pot remains the locus or *alambana* of the emptiness. Emptiness must always be emptiness of something from something else. Kumarila's doctrine of negation *(abave)* entails two factors, *pratiyogin* (that which is denied) and *anuyogin* (the locus in which something is denied. In both the denial of horns on the hare's head and the case of *sunyata*, Kumarila's doctrine of *abave* accounts for the presence of an *alambana*.

113b-114a And the earth, etc., would be the cause of the generation of the cognition of even that totally non-experienced object that is imagined mentally.[198]

114b-115a Presence of the object and connection of the sense organs with the object are the properties belonging only to valid perception, and not to any other cognition. In other cognitions these two properties have no bearing.[199]

115b-116a If, at the time of the dreaming cognition, the object is absent, then how can such an object generate a dreaming cognition?

On the contrary, how can you (Yogacarins) prove that an absent object cannot produce a cognition?

116b-117a The dispute between us is whether or not cognitions have any external *alambana*. Even if the proximity of the object is not there, how could that destroy my (Kumarila's) stance?

117b-118a Therefore, that cognition which grasps an object other than it actually is, that is *niralambana* or *abhava alambana*.[200] And *abhava* is not negation, but another positive thing.[201]

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198 The meaning of the word *prakriti* is in view here. The conjectured objection to which Kumarila is responding is that since Mimamsakas do not accept the Samkhya idea of primordial matter (*prakriti*) as the cause of the universe, then sentences which assert *prakriti* to be the cause of the universe must be regarded as *niralambana* even by Mimamsakas. Kumarila explains that even such words as are meaningless have some basis and refer to something, though by a mistaken designation. The elements including the earth, water, ether, fire, etc., are the referents on which *prakriti* is mis-predicated.

199 The purport of this verse is that dream cognitions are not valid perceptual cognitions and as such do not require the presence of an object.

200 In this context the Yogacarin is presumably arguing that even Mimamsakas should acknowledge dream cognitions as *niralambana*, but now the Mimamsaka is attributing *salambana* even to dreaming cognitions, hence incurring a contradiction. To this criticism Kumarila explains that he understands the notion of *niralambana* quite differently from the

118b-119a Both of these, namely the property of being *niralambana* and the property of having *abhave* as *alambana* are difficult for you Yogacarins to logically describe.[202]

119b-121a And, even the defects in the Yogacara proposition are equally applicable to their reason because of being otherwise than the reason is required to be both collectively and individually.[203] And all of the defects of the example deserve to be pointed out because, if you Yogacarins accept only one reality (*vastu*), there is no possibility of any properties in your example that are concomitant with the *sadhya* and *hetu* of your inference.

121b-126a Some say that Yogacara's inference incurs the defect of lacking an example in support of negative concomitance.[204] Because this logic, namely, that

Yogacarin. Whereas the Yogacarin contends that a cognition grasps only itself, Kumarila defines *niralambana* as that which grasps something otherwise than it actually is.

201 In this context the Yogacarin criticism to which Kumarila retorts is that at least such cognitions of non-existent things, e.g., the book that is not there on the table, must be regarded even by Mimamsakas as *niralambana* cognitions. Kumarila answers with the assertion of his own doctrine of *abave* (negation) by which he understands not a totally non-existent entity, but the absence of that entity from the locus where it was expected to be cognized. The cognition of *abave* entails two positive factors with which the cognition is associated, *pratiyogin* and *aniyogin*. The locus of the object and the absence of the object from that particular locus respectively. Hence, in the cognition of *abave* (an absent entity), something positive is cognized, i.e. the table devoid of the book.

202 The purport of this statement is that the Yogacarin does not accept the Mimamsaka definition of these two terms, namely *abave* and *niralambana*, nor do the Mimamsakas accept the Yogacarins' definitions which, as Kumarila indicates, is not even possible for the Yogacarins to intelligibly explain.

203 The defects which inhere in the *dristanta* are associated with the *hetu*. The verse is a response to the question of how these defects in the *dristanta* apply to the *hetu*. All of the characteristics and forms of the *paksa, sadhya, hetu*, and *dristanta* are defective, whether examined individually or in their various relationships to each other.

204 Kumarila points out that proposing something non-existent as the *vipaksa* is possible only if something positive is to be proved. But, since in the case of the Yogacarin proposition, *niralambanata* is to be inferred, it is impossible to demonstrate the non-existence in the *hetu* of something which does not exist.

use of inference is possible even if something non-existent is proposed as the *vipaksa*, can be advanced in the case of a positive proposition where syllogism is possible even on making something non-existent as *vipaksa*; for example, that in which non-eternality (restriction as to time and space) does not exist, the property of being a product even does not exist, as in the case of a sky-flower, etc. (In this way the above mentioned logic can be applied. But here in the Yogacarins' proposition the *sadhya* is negative and therefore, something positive is to be proposed as *vipaksa* wherefrom absence of the *sadhya* is to be expressed. The negative concomitance which may be shown by the Yogacarin shows only something positive due to double negation. On *vastus*, things, not being existent, nothing positive can be proposed as *vipaksa* by Yogacarins.

126b-127a In regard to the rejection of the omniscience of the Buddha, perceptual knowledge of the Lord Buddha, like our own, is incapable of grasping past and future objects.[205]

127b-129a Even if a negative example is not available, others say that does not constitute a defect in the *hetu* because, even without proposing a negative

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205 While this argument concerning the omniscience of the Buddha appears to enter the discussion quite out of the blue, it is contextualized as an anticipation of a Yogacarin objection to the foregoing criticism. The Yogacarin imagines that Kumarila rejects the omniscience of the Buddha on the basis of a reason which is subject to the same criticism Kumarila has just issued against the Yogacarins. Kumarila retorts that his rejection of the omniscience of the Buddha is not based on the reason the Yogacarin imagines. The Yogacarin presumably thinks that Kumarila's rejection is based on the Buddha being a human being, like us. If this were Kumarila's reason, then he, too, would be unable to produce a *vipaksa* insofar as, in such a *vipaksa*, he would have to posit omniscience in such things that are not human beings. Kumarila is not prepared to grant omniscience to anyone, human or divine. Kumarila's inference in rejection of the omniscience of the Buddha entails a reason which is not susceptible to the charge of lacking one of the necessary *rupas* for the establishment of a proper reason. Hence, Kumarila carefully demonstrates that his rejection of the omniscience of the Buddha is not a parallel case with the Buddhist proposition of *niralambanata*. In Kumarila's rendition of the argument, a *vipaksa* can be established. Wherever there is no direct perception, for example, *sabdapramana*, there is such a *pramana* which even has past and future objects as its content.

example, the *hetu* can lead to an unambiguous conclusion, (i.e., one single end). The path of discussion (lines of argument) always proceeds from those who have the requisite instrumentality available. On account of the *Sunyavadin*[206] not having the proper means, he has no right to participate in the discourse.

129b-130a But I ask you, have we Yogacarins not employed means which are acceptable to you?[207] So, why have you (Mimamsakas) pointed out the defect of non-establishment in our inference by proposing so many alternatives?

130b-133a Why do you, who are supposedly experts in logic, intend to deceive us. Have you not heard that a *hetu* must be acceptable to both parties?[208] Even if one were to propose such a *hetu* which is established for himself, but not for the other party, a solution to the problem may be possible, but what could possibly be the solution to the problem of a *hetu* not acceptable to the party who proposes it? A man proposing such a *hetu,* not established even for himself, would contradict his own previously stated view. One cannot understand the object in the form of the *sadhya* by means of such a *hetu* which has not been previously established.

133b-134b But a *hetu* is intended for explaining things to others, therefore, the *hetu* must be sufficient for convincing others, not the proposing party.

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206 In spite of popular usage, we contend that *Sunyavadin* refers to the Yogacarin, not to the Madhyamika. Kumarila identifies his opponent here as *Sunyavadin* because the Yogacarin's denial of the externality of objects so characterizes them.

207 The implication here is that the Yogacarins are only borrowing the epistemological methods acceptable to Mimamsakas, but do not own such means or regard them as ultimately real.

208 The reference and appeal is to the Buddhist logician Dinnaga who states: "That *hetu* which is well decided by both parties is a proper reason." Kumarila cites the Buddhists own authority in logic and insinuates that they are attempting to conceal the truth of the matter. Note that Kumarila on several occasions is not reticent to charge the Yogacarins with outright deceit. Cf. verse 130; verse 8.

Therefore, a reason not acceptable to others is no reason, but why should a reason be called no reason simply because it is not established for the proposing party? The property of a reason being acceptable to both parties is not instrumental for bringing about either any tangible result in this world or any result hereafter.[209]

135 Those who start explaining things to others would come to know by means of a reason which is established for themselves. If the reason is not established for the person who attempts to explain it, then how can he explain it to others?

But what do you stand to gain by this argument?

136 **Whether the factors instrumental for inferring are believed by me or not, if I propose reasoning that is acceptable to you (Mimamsakas), do you not understand it?**

137 **In the case of verbal testimony, it is required that the person who makes the testimony should understand and believe that of which he speaks prior to explaining it to others, but in the case of inference, uniformity is not necessary, therefore, your objection is not justified.**

138 Why, then, don't you accept your own inference as a case of verbal testimony? **Had it been a case of verbal testimony, then merely by proposing the proposition (first limb of the syllogism) you Mimamsakas would have accepted my assertion only on account of not knowing any defect in me.**

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209 Here the Yogacarin argues that no one incurs any moral or material consequence for proposing a reason in which the proposer does not himself believe.

139 **Since you (Mimamsakas) require a reason in support of what we propose, therefore, this shows that it is a case of inference for others, not verbal testimony. The function of the syllogistic sentence is desired only for generating the memory of the meaning of the words, namely, *paksa*, *sadhya*, *hetu*, etc.**

140 **Therefore, as you do not require trustworthiness in the speaker for inferential reasoning for yourself, similarly, trustworthiness in the speaker is not necessary for inferential reasoning to convince others.**

141 **Furthermore, you (Mimamsakas) do not require any independent verification by us (Yogacarins) for your own perception which is a kind of cognition, so why do you require independent verification of us in regard to our inferential reasoning for the sake of others?**

142 **Therefore, this answer given by Mimamsakas that "since this reason is not established for you Buddhists, therefore it is not a proper reason for me Mimamsaka", is not befitting learned people.**

143 This would have been true if the purpose of your (Yogacarin) syllogism would have been solely for the sake of my (Mimamsaka's) understanding, then the property of being a proper reason for me would have belonged to even such a *hetu* which is not established for you (Yogacarins).

144 But, when in respect of your (Yogacarin) conviction that all cognitions are *niralambana*, you Yogacarins are asked by anyone: "what is your reason?", then

this argument, (namely, that it is not necessary for the speaker to believe the reasons he offers), is not justified.

145 You Yogacarins could in no way ascertain this *sadhya,* (namely, the *niralambanata* of all cognitions), by means of such a *hetu* which is not grasped by yourself, but which is only established for me (Mimamsakas).

146 Proposing such a *hetu*, which the proposer does not believe in, is not effective for the mediator because proposing only such a *hetu* that is instrumental for the ascertainment of the proposer is logically justified.

147-148 How do you come to know that this reason is established for me? And how is it that you, who do not know the point (namely, the form of the reason, i.e., the property of being a cognition) yourself, can desire to speak in response to an inquirer like me (Mimamsaka)? Only those speakers are justified who know beforehand of what they speak. Having understood this point, your respectable senior, Dinnaga, has stated that the *hetu* must be established for both parties.

149 Therefore, as you desire to engender in me the knowledge of your *sadhya* by means of this *hetu* which is supposedly acceptable to me (Mimamsaka), similarly, I also desire to impress upon you the unintelligibility of your *sadhya* by means of its defects acceptable to me (Mimamsaka).

150-151 As you have proposed this type of *sadhya (niralambanata)*, without knowing its proper reason conforming to the *sadhya*, are defeated in explaining it to me; similarly, the one to whom you are to explain this, in spite of sincerely

desiring to know that type of *sadhya*, does not understand it because of thinking the reason defective.

152 One does not understand what you (Yogacarins) have stated because of the impossibility of a *sadhya* (*niralambanata* taken as *paramartha satya*) on the basis of a reason which is *samvrti satya.*

153 Therefore, even by mistake, you Yogacarins should not have any such hope as **'knowing the *hetu* stated by me (Yogacarin) to be a proper one, only another (Mimamsaka) will understand my (Yogacarin) point.'**

154 When Aksapada (Gotama) counted contradiction of the proposition as a defect, he must have had this very proposition (the Yogacarin proposition that all cognitions are without any basis in the external world) in mind as the example[210]. But the opponent (the Yogacarin), not realizing this, thought it not a defect.

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210 The defect in view here is referred to by the technical designation as *pratigya virodha*. This defect, according to the Nyaya sutra, occurs when the *hetu* is contradictory to the proposition. According to the commentary on this verse, the controversy hinges on Dignaga's rejection of *virodha pratigya* as a valid category of defect. The reason, evidently provided by Dignaga, is that the example used to substantiate this defect is not a valid example. Specifically, the example alluded to is *"nitya sabdah sarvasya anitatva"* -: "sound is eternal because all is non-eternal. Dignaga suggests that the reading of the example is both incorrect and incomplete. Dignaga corrects the reading of this example to read-: *'sarvayayavasya'* (partless) rather than *'sarvasya'* (all). According to Dignaga, even the correct reading is incomplete because it lacks a stated reason. He then reconstructs the argument to read-: "Sound is eternal because it is not made of parts, for example, a pot." Hence, "whatever is made of parts is non-eternal, unlike things made of parts, *Sabda* is not made of parts and is therefore eternal. The aim of Dignaga's reconstruction is to show that no such defect occurs in the example provided and no other example could be provided to establish the existence of the type of defect classified by Nyaya as *pratigya virodha*. Kumarila, leaves the controversy regarding the example aside and suggests that the very *pratigya* advanced by the Yogacarin, i.e., "All cognitions are *niralambana*," is the example the author of the Nyaya sutra had in mind when defining the defect known as *pratigya virodha*!

155 **By means of *samvrittisatya*, the *hetu* established in practical life, we also knew the *sadhya* before explaining it to you, but as far as absolute reality (*paramartha satya*) is concerned, the *hetu* is non-existent.**[211]

156 That which is known now as not existing as absolute reality, how was it existent to you before? And, when it was non-existent, how could it serve as a proper *hetu*?

157 If it is a proper reason, then it must be a *paramarthasatya* [existing as absolute reality]. By means of what is not an absolute reality, establishment of an absolute reality is not justified.

158 Instrumentality for valid cognitions etc., was not seen at all in the hare's horn, etc.. Cognition of fire, etc., by means of steam, etc., which is not smoke, is false.

159 Therefore, your knowledge of absolute reality by means of false reason is also false. By means of what appears to be absolute reality, but is not, absolute reality is not understood.

160 Even those scripts that are seen as instrumental for understanding various articulate sounds, in the form of consonants and vowels, are not devoid of absolute reality in their own forms.[212]

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211 The reason is true for practical purposes, but not according to absolute truth.

212 The background of this verse is the conjectured Yogacarin objection that since there are so many different scripts by which letters are represented, the scripts are unreal. Hence, the import of the objection is to suggest that the Mimamsakas, by means of unreal scripts, try to prove what they believe to be real. In the same way that Kumarila has just accused Yogacarins of attempting to prove the real by means of the false, so now here the Yogacarin is returning the favor. However, Kumarila demonstrates that the scripts are true in themselves without reference to other scripts. It matters little that there are various different scripts for rendering one and the

161 If it be challenged by the Yogacarin that the scripts are not real in the form of the letters, then we Mimamsakas agree that nothing is at all real in the form of a different thing.[213]

162 If something is present in its own form, it can be mistaken for something else and thereby generate an invalid cognition. Upon determining the non-existence of a given thing, even in its own form, such a thing would lead to neither truth nor falsity, generating neither a valid nor invalid cognition.[214]

163 Therefore your (Yogacarin) *hetu* etc., which are non-existent in their own forms, can neither be instrumental for generating an invalid cognition of fire, as in the case of steam mistaken for smoke, nor can they be instrumental for generating a valid cognition, as in the case of scripts being instrumental for generating the valid cognitions of articulate sounds.

164 **Your criticism is baseless because the own-forms of our means are only of the nature of empirical reality. And therefore, reality itself is not denied of the means, so how is there unreality of our means in their own-form?**[215]

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same vowel or consonant sound. Each script is real in and of itself in so far as it successfully represents the articulate sound to which it refers.

213 The conjectured objection of the Yogacarin here is that scripts are not real insofar as they are not the articulate sounds for which they stand. Kumarila dismisses this objection by agreeing with the common sense observation that anything, when looked upon as something else, is not real.

214 The implication of this verse is that since '*niralambanata*' is non-existent, it cannot generate any cognition whatsoever, be it valid or invalid. Kumarila wishes to render the Yogacarin proposition to be an expression of utmost stupidity, bankrupt of any intelligibility or practical use; it is inconceivable as a cognition.

215 This objection issued by the Yogacarin parallels the argument Kumarila advanced in defense of the reality of scripts in their own forms. The Yogacarin had previously argued that various scripts, which graphically symbolized articulate sounds, were not real. Kumarila retorted

165 Since that which the Yogacarin calls *samvrittisatya* is limited only to verbal expressions, therefore, such a reason cannot become instrumental for ascertaining any absolute reality.

166 There remains no reason available to you by means of which you can establish the difference between an empirical reality and absolute reality. (Even if the two-fold division of reality be granted, how can that thing be absolute reality which is known by means of empirical reality)?

167 **Even on the non-externality of the object, acts are accomplished by means of a given thing arising in one's mind due to the distinction developed from the recurring impressions and differences in names.**

168 **And, it has been stated by experts in logic that use of inference and other means of knowing is imagined on the basis of a property, etc.,[216] being dependent on mind, and not because of the external existence of property, etc.**

169 Such a statement has to be examined.[217] One cannot distinguish between things that are not real, even by means of *vasanas* and different names.[218]

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that such scripts were real 'in their own forms,' i.e., with reference to themselves. Now the Yogacarin suggests that similarly, the relative unreality, (*samvrittisatya*), of their means is to be regarded as real in their own forms.'

216 *Adi* (etc.), refers, in both instances in this verse, to that to which a given property belongs; hence, *dharma* and *dharmin*.

217 This refers to the statement attributed to Dinnaga and other Buddhist logicians in the preceding verse.

218 The import is that without difference, one cannot do inferential reasoning. This difference is possible only between things that are real, existent, *sat*. A given thing, existent

170 How is the birth of impressions and names possible with regard to unreal things? For you Yogacarins even differences in names is not proved because of the non-existence of the things.

171-172 If, on the basis of difference imagined to be existent, (having imaginary existence), you Yogacarins think yourself successful in convincing me (Mimamsaka) by means of your proposition, (by proposing *sadhya*, *hetu*, etc.), then whatever defects I have shown in your proposed reason would stand as defects because cognitions with regard to all that equally takes place.

173 And your *mantra*, namely, "that things imagined, not really existent, on the basis of past impressions, is sufficient for convincing others" is equally applicable to the defects wē have pointed out.[219]

174 Establishment, according to you Yogacarins, of objects of use is only based on imagination caused by *vasanas*. Whereas, unlike the reason proposed by you (Yogacarin), the defect stated by me (Mimamsaka) is actually established.

175 Cognition is possible even of imaginary things, but making use of such things is not possible.

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somewhere, may be mistaken to exist elsewhere, but if a given thing is nowhere existent, how can it be mistaken to be anywhere?

219 Here Kumarila' s complaint is that if on the basis of imaginary things one is able to say something, theǹ anyone can say anything.

176 **Just as the *hetu* is not desired as absolute reality by us (Yogacarin), so also do we regard the defects pointed out by you (Mimamsakas). Therefore, on account of the unreality (non-existence) of defects, our reason may be flawless.**

177 If, on account of the non-reality of your (Yogacarin) reason, you Yogacarins accept our refutation of your theory, then nothing remains to be done regarding defects of your reason.[220]

178 For you Yogacarins difference between *vasanas* is not justified for lack of any suitable reason. If difference in memory be accepted as cause for difference in *vasanas*, then how is one memory any different from other memories?[221]

179 **Difference in cognitions is due to difference in *vasanas*.** But, for you Yogacarins there can be no difference between contentless cognitions, therefore, you incur the defect of circularity.

180-181 And there is no proof in support of the existence of or even the difference between *vasanas*. And even if the existence of the *vasana* is accepted, it may account for the differentiation of that which is instrumental for throwing light on the cognition concerned, but could not distinguish any difference in their content

220 The only purpose in advancing defects in the Yogacarins' reason was to refute their reason. However, if their reason is admittedly false, unreal, non-existent, then there is little point in discussing the defects of a non-existent reason.

221 Since the effects of *vasanas* are different from each other, the *vasanas* of which they are the effects must be different. Kumarila insists that the Yogacarin must prove the difference of effects, (memories), in order to infer differences in their respective causes.

because that *vasana*, being born of experience, generates memory only[222]. Since the cognitions are momentary and their destruction[223] is total, they cannot be instrumental for differentiating between cognitions.

182 For lack of compresence of the thing to be perfumed with that which is instrumental for perfuming, the *vasana* cannot be generated. The succeeding cognition is not born of the preceding momentary cognition and therefore cannot be perfumed by it.

183 The *vasana* belonging to the preceding cognition by means of the succeeding one is not possible due to the destruction of the preceding one.[224]

184 Even on account of the momentariness of both the preceding and succeeding cognition, their mutual act of perfuming is not possible. And, how can a given thing which is liable for destruction in the immediately succeeding moment be perfumed by another preceding cognition which is facing destruction?

185-186 A positive thing enduring for more than a single moment may be perfumed by means of another positive enduring thing.

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222 Implicit in this verse is the fact that memory, and the experience through which memory is born, have the same content. Experience is the cause and memory is the effect; but they are virtually indistinguishable because all is without content. Hence, even the memory born of experience through a *vasana* cannot have any content.

223 *niranvaye* means total destruction; without leaving behind any trace.

224 The import is that if the Yogacarin tries to argue that the influence of the *vasana* on the cognition occurs in reverse sequential order, i.e., if the succeeding cognition were somehow responsible for generating the preceding *vasana*, such could never be the case because the preceding cognition would have been destroyed by the time the succeeding one could be said to produce any effect whatsoever.

Your (Mimamsakas') argument is not justified because a given thing can be regarded durable if the succeeding one does not differ from the preceding. The generation of a purposeful *vasana* can be accounted for only by regarding things as momentary because of the succeeding one having similarity with and difference from the preceding one.

187 It does not conform to your theory because of the momentariness of cognitions. The preceding, yet to be born, cognition cannot produce any effect anywhere, including the succeeding cognition and its inherent *vasana*.

188 When the preceding cognition is destroyed, then it cannot act as a cause of a succeeding cognition. The property of being the cause does not belong to the preceding cognition at the moment of its birth because, in the very moment the preceding cognition is born, it cannot produce the succeeding cognition insofar as its existence is limited to the preceding moment.

189 Again, I ask you, when the preceding cognition possess the property of having been destroyed totally without any trace, on what basis do you accept similarity between a preceding and succeeding cognition? Not even a single property belonging to the preceding cognition is available in the succeeding cognition.

190- 191 Similarity cannot exist except in the case of two things which have common properties. If, as you Yogacarins believe, similarity be the basis for the generation of a *vasana* in the subsequent cognition, then, when a cognition of an elephant follows the cognition of a cow, a *vasana* cannot be generated in the cognition of an elephant because of the distinction between the two cognitions, i.e., cognitions of cow and elephant. Therefore, generation of a *vasana*, on the basis of similarity in the succeeding cognition, cannot be accepted.

192 All distinct cognitions would not be generated from other distinct cognitions. External objects do not generate cognitions. Since external objects are meant for others, they cannot control any cognitions or *vasanas*.

193 How can such *vasanas* generate their effects in respective memories either successively or simultaneously? Generation of an effect is desired by you Yogacarins only on the total destruction of the cause, not otherwise.

194 In that very moment, when the locus of the *vasanas* are destroyed, all the *vasanas* are destroyed along with it. Either individual memories cannot take place, or, if they can, then they will comprehend all objects simultaneously.

195(B)-197 If, [for argument's sake], you (Yogacarins) believe that *vasanas* continue to exist even after the destruction of their locus, this would undermine your theory of momentariness. Since the *vasana* would not be destroyed in the immediately succeeding moment, it would never be destroyed and, consequently, memory could never occur. Even if the flow of *vasanas* be accepted like the flow of cognitions, even then, memory would not occur. These two, namely *vasana* and cognition in the form of memory, according to you Yogacarins, would generate only a homogenous effect. Neither one can ever bring about the other.[225]

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225 According to the Yogacarin, a preceding cause generates a homogenous effect. This has been argued in order to avoid the absurdity of the cognition of an elephant following immediately upon the cognition of a cow. Kumarila argues that since the effect of a *vasana* belongs to one class of cognitions, namely memory, and since the *vasana* does not belong to that class of cognitions, no homogenous effect can follow from a cause belonging to a different class. There can be no reciprocity between the two. For the same reason, no connection between experience and *vasana* can be established.

198-200(A) According to you Yogacarins, there is no other extraneous cause by means of which a heterogeneous result would occur. This *vasana*, according to you Yogacarins, is a *samvrttisatya*, is only false, and does not exist in absolute reality. By means of such positive things, including *vasanas* which are seen to be false, no effect can be generated anywhere. For one whose Knower (Soul) is enduring, various subsequent repeated cognitions are associated. That enduring Knower itself is the locus of the *vasana*.[226] Or that Knower itself may be regarded as the *vasana*.[227]

200(B)-201 **The lemon fruit born of the tree from the seeds sprinkled with red wax juice makes the lemon fruit red.**.[228] In the case of sprinkling the flower of a particular lemon with red wax juice, it is the color of that juice which is transferred to the fruit (through the seed) and the tree born of the seed and, therefore, there is no *vasana* at all.[229]

202 Followers of the Buddha have been entrapped in regard to all that he stated concerning the imaginary, non-existent and illogical *vasana* theory. Whereas the Buddha intended only to shake his followers faith in external durable objects and their utility, the followers mistook his words in a literal sense.

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226 Here it is stated that *Atman* is the locus of the *vasana*. The two are inseparably related but not identical. One houses the other. *Atman* is the locus of the *vasana* which implies some difference between them.

227 In a figurative sense, Kumarila identifies the *Atman* with the *vasana* insofar as they are inseparably associated, not strictly identical. In any case, because the Soul, unlike the Yogacarin's consciousness, does not change, it can serve as the "storehouse" of consciousness.

228 Here the Yogacarin supposedly proposes an analogy in support of the notion that the effect of the *vasana* may be transferred to a succeeding cognition. According to the analogy, the quality, namely, red color, originally associated with the cause, is transferred to the effect. But, this analogy implies that red color is fully associated with the cause, not the effect.

229 Kumarila's point is that the quality, namely, red, cannot be transferred to the flower without the transfer of the substance, namely, wax juice, in which the red color inheres.

CHAPTER SEVEN

VIMSATIKA AND AUTO-COMMENTARY

The meaning of Mahayana's path and purpose is to lead people to the realization that the three realms of existence [the worlds of actualities and possibilities] are cognition only. According to the *sutra*[230], "Oh, sons of the world conquering hero!, The three realms of existence are mind only." *Citta*, *manas*, consciousness and cognition are synonymous.[231] The use of the word '*citta*' includes its associations.[232] The use of the word 'only' excludes any autonomous object of sense or understanding.[233]

1 Due to the appearance of non-existent objects, all this is cognition only, just as there may be the vision of non-existent nets of hair by someone suffering from an optical disorder.

Objection:

How can you say such a thing?

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[230] *Avatamsaka-sutra*: *Dasa-bhumika* VI, p. 32 (R, p49). The sutra here alluded to employs the term *cittamatra* whereas Vasubandhu uses the term *vijnapti matra*. Vasubandhu justifies his use of this term by appealing to its synonymy with *cittamatra*.

[231] In traditional usage within Indian systems, these three terms are by no means synonymous. For example in the Samkya and Yoga schools three distinct functions of mind are delineated. Manas is that dynamic of mental activity which functions on the basis of contact. The *ahankara* functions to establish temporal and personal relations with the object concerned. *Buddhi*, known in the Samkya and Yoga systems as '*mahat*', the great, is the decision making facility of the mind. Vasubandhu seems to collapse all such distinctions and usage into a single notion that all that exists is cognition.

[232] The literal meaning of the word *citta* does not include its associates, i.e., the objects of sense or content of cognition. However, Vasubandhu is inaugurating a new technical understanding of this term and its synonymy with the various others mentioned.

[233] The controversy as to whether Vasubandhu's theory of consciousness has any reference to the external world of objects is sharp and well documented. It is difficult to see, in light of this clear qualification issued by Vasubandhu, how he can be exonerated from a flat denial of the externality of objects. The question has been raised regarding the realm from which such autonomous objects of sense or understanding are to be excluded. One might argue that such objects independent of consciousness are to be excluded from the pervue of Vasubandhu's discussion, but not necessarily excluded from the realm of existence, albeit the phenomenic, *samvrtti satya* domain.

2 **If without an object there is consciousness of form, then why does consciousness of objects occur at a particular point in space and not everywhere else? Furthermore, why does it occur sometimes at that particular point in space and not all the time?**

Commentary:

If without an object, the cognition of an object appears then why is it that cognition of objects occurs in that particular place and not everywhere? And even in that particular place cognition appears sometimes, not all the time. In that place and time it occurs to all the persons present at that given time and place, not in just one person's mental stream, i.e., not like optical disorders which are given to a single person and not to others. And why is it that by means of such objects seen in the eye of an optical disorder we cannot engage in meaningful activities? Why is it that we do not do meaningful activities through these objects? Why don't we engage in the same sorts of meaningful activities as we do with normally seen objects? For example just as with food, drink, clothes, poisons, and weapons that are seen in dreams, we do not realize the activities of eating, drinking, dressing, killing, etc. In an imagined or fantasized city, like that of Gandharva, we don't do urban activities as we would do in Varanasi. For this reason in the case of objects being non-real, determination in time and space and subsequent activities are not possible.

Rebuttal:

It is not reasonable to say that the above activities such as eating, drinking, dressing, being poisoned, killing, etc. do not happen if the objects are not real because

3a It is evident that the definiteness of cognition regarding space and time is like a dream.

Commentary:

Svapnavat means like in a dream. How is it dream like? In dreams cities, gardens, men and women, etc., are seen at a given place, not all places. Although such objects are not real, they are seen at some place and not all other places. Furthermore, in that particular place those objects are seen sometimes, not all the time. Thus it is evident that even without real objects there is experiential definiteness of time and space.

3b The non-restriction[234] of cognition series is seen to be like the experiences of departed souls.

Commentary:

The word *siddha* [established] is to be read even here. The word *pretavat* means like that of departed souls. **How is it established that the non-restriction of cognition series is like the departed souls?** Non-restriction of the various cognition series of various persons assembled at the same time and place is like the various series of cognitions of puss rivers, etc. arising equally in various departed souls who have committed similar crimes. Just as a jar full of ghee is a ghee jar, so also a river filled with puss is a puss river.[235] As they see the river full of puss so also they see rivers filled with urine and excrement controlled by attendants of the king of death wielding sticks and swords, etc. Thus non-restriction of the series of cognitions is proved even when the external objects are non-existent.

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[234] Non-restriction means experiential definiteness.

[235] Here Vasubandhu accounts for the peculiar construction of a compound not explained by Panini. The river full of puss is indicated by the *madhyamapadatopi* compound so called because it drops the middle word. The compound which expresses the idea of a jar full of ghee is also of the *madhymapadatopi* type. Hence in the absence of any word within the compound to indicate "full of", Vasubandhu is careful to explain the use of and precedence for such compounds which drop the middle word.

4a As various purposes are served in a dream when it is obstructed by means of non-existent objects, so also in the waking state one's purpose is served by means of non-existing things.

Commentary:

The word *siddha*[236] occurs here also. Just as in (wet) dreams of the congress (sexual intercourse) of men and women without actual physical contat there is discharge of semen, in the same way meaningful activities are performed with objects seen in perceptual anomaly [or in waking state] Thus by means of these various examples, the collection of the four objections, namely restriction of time and place and non-restriction of various moment series and the performance of various purposeful activities are shown to occur even without real objects.

4b **Furthermore as it is in hell, everything is proved to be the same even in the waking state.**

Commentary:

The word 'proved' should be read even here.[237] As in the hells is the meaning of the word 'like-hell'.

How are cognitions of non-existing objects established as in hell?

4c When departed souls reach hell, they encounter hell police and other terrifying things which, though non-existent, are instrumental for terrorizing them.

Commentary:

As all, not any particular individual, departed souls equally experience hell police, etc., perpetually attacking and retreating in various types of hell and they all (the departed souls) are equally obstructed or terrorized by them (the hell police etc.)

[236] If a word occurs in the following sentence from a previous sentence, then the original gender and number of the word may change in accordance with the gender and number of the word with which it is construed.

[237] '*Siddhi*'-proved is not written in the verse, so Vasubandhu leaves his readers in no quandary as to how to fill in the verse's syntactical gap.

in a restricted place and restricted time, not because of the givenness of the objects, but because of the compulsion of their coincidental karmic consequences, similarly even in the waking state all the four (objections), like restriction to place and time, are proved. The word *adi* (in the original verse) refers to ferocious dogs, crows, iron mountains, etc.

Objection:

Why is it that hell police, ferocious dogs, and crows are not taken as real experiencing subjects?

Answer:

It is not possible. They cannot be proved to be living beings of hell because they do not experience suffering as do the ordinary living beings in hell. If hell police, etc., be regarded as living beings, [then due to their similar physical forms, and physical strength] they would mutually torture each other and no such distinction could be made between those who torture and those who are tortured. Then if hell police were living beings of hell and as such would be equivalent in forms, size and physical strength to other departed souls, then such a fear among departed souls in hell would not be possible. Furthermore how could they possibly inflict torture on others in hell when they themselves would not be able to endure the suffering of scorching heat while standing upon the extremely hot iron ground? Moreover how can there be any possibility of hell police in hell if they originally belonged to another region?

Objection:

If the birth of inferior beings is possible in heaven, then why is the same not possible in hell?

5 As the heavenly beings are born in heaven, hellish beings are not so born in hell because those who are supposedly born in hell do not experience the sufferings engendered in hell.

Commentary:

Those heavenly beings who are born in heaven experience in return the pleasures engendered there because they are born there by means of their past acts which deserve to result in the pleasures associated with the abode of the heavenly realm. However hellish beings do not experience in return the sufferings engendered in hell. Therefore birth of such hellish beings as dogs, crows, etc., in hell is not justified, neither is the birth of hell police.

Opponent:

Then due to the past acts of those departed souls in hell particular elements in hell are produced. Such elements characterized by horrifying complexions, terrifying physical forms, towering height and massive strength receive the name of hellish beings and their various terrible shapes like ferocious dogs, crows etc. They are transformed into such terrible forms that seem to be performing various acts like flailing their hands, etc., for the purpose of instilling fear in the departed souls. They resemble the physical forms of sheep and mountains perpetually attacking [the departed souls] and retreating. They also appear as the iron forest of silk cotton tress infested with unusually long and extremely sharp thorns protruding both upwards and downwards. In this way they certainly appear to be produced.

Response:

6 Why not accept those terrible elements as various transformations of various cognition series due to the past deeds of departed souls instead of supposing these elements to have been created?

Commentary:

Why do you not consider those so called terrible objects to be various transformations of cognition series due to the past deeds of departed souls? Why

do yo suppose these to be the elements [created by the past actions of living souls]?

And furthermore...

7 According to the opponent the impression caused by deeds is in one place (namely, in the departed soul) and the result is in another place (namely, the elements). What is the reason that the result itself is not accepted to be where the impression is?

Commentary:

According to the opponent, it is the acts of those departed souls living in hell by means of which generation and transformation of elements are accepted in hell. Thus according to the opponent, the impression inheres in a given cognitive series but the result is affected elsewhere (i.e., in the elements). Then why is it not accepted by the opponent that the result of that impression born of that deed does not take place in that very cognitive series? What is the reason that the result does not take place there where the impressions inhere?

Commentary introducing verse 8:

One may argue **that it is on the basis of scriptural authority. If, as the proponent, Vasubandhu, believes, the cognitive series itself would have appeared as physical forms (i.e., ten-fold *ayantana*), and not as external objects, then the existence of these physical forms would not have been stated by the Lord Buddha.**

Reply:

This is not a valid reason because

8 In spite of the non-existence of spontaneously generated beings, the Buddha spoke of them with another intention in mind. So also he spoke of existence of external physical forms (*rupa ayantana*) to his students with a prticular intention.

Commentary:

The Lord Buddha once said that spontaneously generated beings exist. This was stated with a view to explaining that the uninterrupted cognitive series is not likely to be discontinued in the future. This is proved on another statement of the Buddha that any such spontaneously generated being or soul simply does not exist in this world, but that all are generated by their respective causes. Therefore, the Buddha made such statements about the existence of sense fields with an intention

to teach people the Dharma.

What is the intention behind this?

9 A given cognition proceeds from its own seed and appears [to have an external object for its content]. The Buddha spoke of this phenomena in terms of the two-fold sense field.

Commentary:

What is stated? A given cognition proceeds from its own seed. When it reaches its specific transformation the cognition appears to have color as its content. With regard to the seed and its emergence in the appearance of an object, the Buddha referred to both eye and visual object as internal and external transformations of consciousness respectively. Similarly the Buddha stated that a tactile cognition proceeds from its own seed which transforms itself into the body (internal sense organ of touch) and tangible objects (external tactile objects). This is the Buddha's intention [in speaking about sense organs and their corresponding objects].

Comment introducing verse 10:

What is to be gained by having taught with such an intention?

10a In that way one may enter into the essencelessness of personality.

Commentary:

By having taught in that way, people are enabled to enter into the essencelessness of personality. From the six-fold twins[238], the six-fold cognitions are born. There is no one single cognizer nor even one single meditator. Knowing this teaching of the essencelessness of personality, some followers of the Buddha entered into the essencelessness of personality.[239]

10b This other discourse on cognition-only is meant for the realization of the essencelessness of external objects.

Commentary:

How does one realize the essencelessness of external objects by means of the discourse on consciousness-only? One enters this realization by knowing that it is consciousness alone which is generated in what appears to be external objects like color, etc., and that there are no such external objects.

Question:

But if all things are characterized by essencelessness, then even the hypothesis of cognition-only is essenceless, so how then can cognition-only be established?

Answer:

Realization of the essencelessness of objects is not because the objects do not exist at all, rather it is

10c in regard to the very forms of imagined objects.

Commentary:

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[238] The six sense organs and their corresponding sense objects.

[239] The mission of the Buddha entering the house in which eternal entities are discussed is to tactfully and strategically lead the inhabitants of the house to the realization that there is emptiness of eternal self. The intention is to speak the language of eternal entities in order to turn the inhabitants on to deconstruct the belief in defense of which the house speaks the language it does. The desire to see and the things to be seen form this two-fold foundation. These six sense organs emerge. Indeed there is no single knowing subject (cognitive agent). There is no single cogito nor a single object to be known. There is no unitariness in the knower and the known object. Having known this, those who are dispositionally ready to hear the discourse on momentariness enter the path of essencelessness. That is the mission.

Essencelessness of those objects [is realized] with regard to their various imaginary properties imagined by ignorant people to be the grasped or grasper. Essencelessness does not apply to the ineffable nature of that which is realized by Buddhas. Similarly, essencelessness of even consciousness is to be realized in so far as it is imaginary in the form of another consciousness.[240] If this is not accepted, then one consciousness would have another consciousness as its object and the theory of consciousness-only would not be proved because a consciousness would then be possessing another consciousness as its content. Thus by the establishment of consciousness-only, the realization of essencelessness takes place. It does not take place by contradicting the existence of objects (*dharmas*). When an object (*dharma*) is regarded as possessing its real nature, it is not contradicted by the realization of essencelessness, but only the possession of imaginary properties is rejected.[241]

Question:

But how can it be ascertained that the Buddha spoke of sense-fields with this intention as explained by you (Yogacarins) and not with the intention to prove the existence of all these things which become the object-content of various cognitions?

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[240] This statement is to be read in light of the problem which arises when a cognition becomes an object-content of another cognition. In such a case the cognition which forms the content of another cognition must be regarded as an object, not consciousness. In this respect the doctrine of cognition-only would fail because one would have to admit that a cognition has an external object (namely, the other cognition) as its content. The apparent externality of objects which form the content of consciousness is due to a false association with imaginary objects. Here it should be noted that the niralambana theory is the basis for establishing the doctrine of consciousness-only. A cognition cannot be the content of another cognition because such a cognition which serves as content to another would be external to the cognition whose content it forms. *Niralambana* is the rejection of reality to any cognitive content external to the cognition itself. Internal *alambana* (supports) are not denied to cognitions by Vasubandhu. Cognitions, as we have seen, have their own inherent seeds which constitute the internal causative transformations of consciousness.

[241] *Dharmas* exist as different transformations of consciousness, but if mistaken to be external things, then as such they do not exist.

Answer:

Since

11 **the worldly concrete object cannot be proven to be one, nor can it be proved to be more than one atom (i.e., a random configuration of atoms), nor a systematically arranged collection of atoms because atom is not proved.**

Commentary:

What stands stated? The objects which allegedly constitute the content of cognition may be one single entity made of various parts as the Vaisesikas believe, or a random arrangement of more than one atom, or a collection of atoms systematically arranged. Because of the absence of any cognition of a whole different from its parts, a whole different from its parts cannot form the content of a cognition. Nor can it be more than one atom randomly arranged because atoms, which are invisible, cannot constitute a visible collection in the form of an external object. Nor even those atoms which form a systematically arranged collection can become an object of cognition because an atom, itself, as a substance cannot be proved.

12a **How is an atom not proved?** It is because of simultaneous connection [of a central atom] with the collection of six surrounding atoms.[242]

Commentary:

On account of simultaneous connection with the collection of six surrounding atoms in six directions, the property of having six parts is proved as belonging to an atom. Due to the impossibility of the relation of another surrounding atom with the central atom on the same point of space already occupied by one of the six surrounding atoms, it is not possible for more than one atom to occupy the same point of space.

[242] Partlessness or indivisibility of an atom cannot be proved because it is connected. To be connected requires parts.

12b If all six surrounding atoms be accepted as covering the same point of space as the central atom, then the composite object would be only of atomic dimension.

Commentary:

If all six surrounding atoms are accepted as connected at the same pont of space with which the central atom is connected, then on account of all six surrounding atoms being related at one and the same point of space, all such conglomerations would be only of atomic dimension. Thus, because of mutual non-difference in respect of space, not even a single product would be perceivable.

Opponent: Each atom does not get joined with another atom because atoms have no parts and therefore the defect pointed out by you (Vasubandhu) is not justified. But conjunction between two collections of atoms [not between two individual atoms] is possible -- thus hold the Vaibasikas of Kasmir.

Proponent: They should be asked whether the collection of atoms is the same as the individuals which constitute it [or different from the individual atoms]?

13a If there is no conjunction of (individual) atoms, then to which does it belong in the aggregate of atoms?

Commentary:

The conjunction is what is under consideration here[243]

Opponent: **Suppose we (Vaibhasikas) deny that even those collections are conjoined?**

13b Partlessessness cannot be the reason for rejecting the conjunction of individual atoms.[244]

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[243] This terse comment "*samyoga iti vartate*" (conjunction exists) is a brief explanatory note regarding the referent of the impersonal pronoun, *sah*, appearing in the immediately preceding verse. The point is that conjunction is to be born in mind as the referent of the pronoun.

[244] In light of the Vaibhasikas presumed denial of the conjunction even of two aggregates of atoms, whether something is made of parts or not would become irrelevant with regard to establishing conjunction. Since they are presented here as denying the conjunction of even things made of parts, it would seem there is no remaining criteria by which the Vaibhasikas could

Proponent: Then it should not have been stated by you (Vaibhasikas) in the first place that conjunction of individual atoms is not on the basis of partlessness because even of an aggregate which is made of parts conjunction is not accepted by you. Therefore an atom is not proved to be one single (partless) substance. Whether conjunction of an atom is desired by you [the opponent?] or not,

14a concerning that atom which has differences in points of space, the property of oneness is not proved.

Commentary:

For a given atom the upper point of space is one, whereas the lower point of space is another. Thus, how can oneness of an atom of that nature be justified?

14b Otherwise, how can there simultaneously be both shade and light in the upper and lower portions of the atom?

Commentary:

If there were no difference in points of space of every single atom, then upon the rising of the sun, how could there be darkness on one point of space of the atom and light on another point of space of the atom? Since (according to the opponent) an atom has no differing parts, it could not be the case that darkness would be on one point and light on another. How does partial concealment of one atom by another atom take place if difference in parts of an atom depending on their connection with different points of space is not desired by you [the opponent]? When [as the opponent holds] there are no different parts of an atom, then which part of an atom could possibly be concealed by another atom in close proximity to it? When there is no concealment [because of the partlessness of

establish conjunction of any sort. The point has been previously argued by Vasubandhu that since individual atoms have no parts, they cannot be conjoined. Now, supposing the Vaibhasikas deny even the conjunction of aggregates of atoms which do have parts. The Vaibhasikas, under such circumstances, appear to be rendering the distinction between parts and partlessness irrelevant as a criteria for determining how atoms get conjoined.

atoms] then on account of occupying the same point of space, all the aggregates would be only of atomic dimension as has been stated before.[245]

Can you [the opponent] regard an aggregate possessing these two, darkness and concealment, as different from atoms?

"No!", says the opponent.

14c **If an aggregate be not different from atoms, then darkness and concealment cannot be of an aggregate.**

Commentary:

If an aggregate is not regarded as different from atoms, then darkness and concealment cannot belong to the aggregate [since according to the opponent, they are not belonging to partless atoms]. Thus it is established that these two do not belong to a separate aggregate.[246]

Opponent: The external object is the placement of atoms in a given order. Whether it be an aggregate or the atoms, what is to be gained by such thinking?[247] If the external object like colored substance, etc., is not rejected, then the existence of external objects is proved.

Proponent: What is the definition of such objects?

Opponent: An external object is that which has the property of being the object of the sense organs like eyes, etc., and that which has the property of being blue, red, white, sweet, sour, etc.[248]

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[245] This same point was argued in verse 12.

[246] The two, i.e., darkness and concealment would belong only to the atoms. This view has already been refuted.

[247] Here the opponent argues that whether the atoms are regarded as an aggregate or something different form the aggregate is irrelevant to the discussion at hand. The main discussion revolves around whether or not external objects exist.

[248] A Definition may be given in two respects. An object may be identified in terms of its accidental conditional properties in which case it is called *tatasta laksana*; or it may be identified in terms of its natural, innate properties which definition is called *svarupalaksana*. The definition provided by the opponent includes both: 1. *Tatast laksana*- the property of being the object of sense organs; 2. *Svarupa laksana*: having the property of being blue and yellow, etc.

Proponent: Let us examine whether the external object as yellow and blue, etc., which is the object of the eyes, etc., is one single substance or more than one.

Opponent: What is the point in this question?

Proponent: If the object be regarded as many, the defect has already been pointed out.

15 If the object were one single element, gradual movement on one certain thing [like the earth] would not be possible. Nor could it be simultaneously seen and unseen. A plurality of objects could not exist on the earth separately and invisibility of subtle things would not be possible.[249]

Commentary:

If you accept that the visual object is not many but undivided (one) then no successive movement of objects on the earth would be possible. The meaning of the word '*iti*' here is movement. The whole should have moved all at once by a single step. Furthermore, perception of both the frontal part and non-perception of the rear part could not have occurred simultaneously because it is not justified to accept perception and non-perception of the same object simultaneously. Moreover, of the many distinct things, like elephants and horses, etc., existence at different points of space would not occur because in the exact same place that one exists, the other would also exist.[250] Thus how can disjunction of the two be desired by you (opponent)? And how can one of the two be connected to something while the other is not? Furthermore, the gap between the two [elephant and horse] experienced by all proves that the earth is not one indivisable thing.

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[249] The opponent has been appealing to the common sense experience of ordinary human beings in order to establish the existence of external objets. Vasubandhu here challenges the realist on the same basis. He questions the common sensibility of the realists' position by drawing out the absurd implications of regarding external objects as unitary entities.

[250] Two concrete things cannot simultaneously exist on one and the same point of space. Thus it would be impossible to have existence of two concrete things simultaneously on the earth.

And how can the common perception of the gap between the two be justified? When accepting an external object as one single entity, how can you [the opponent] justify the non-perception of subtle living beings in the water, which according to you would have the same form as the gross ones have. Distinction between external objects [according to you] is not on the basis of distinct parts, rather it is on the basis of their respective differentiating marks only. [However unanimity in defining things is rare], therefore difference [among external objects] must be explained on the basis of atoms. And atoms are not proved to be one. Based on the non-establishment of atoms as one, even the so called colored visual objects, etc., are not established. Thus consciousness alone is proved.]

Opponent's objection:

Whether or not things exist is ascertained by means of *pramanas*, among which perception is the most important. If external objects are non-existent, then how does such a cognition as "I perceive this" take place?

16a Perceptual cognition takes place as in a dream, etc.

Commentary:

As in dream, etc., even without existence of the external objects concerned, perceptual cognitions of things take place. The same is the case with waking perceptions as we have made known before.[251]

16b In the moment when that perceptual cognition takes place, the so called object of that cognition is not seen. How, then, can perceptability belong to that object?

Commentary:

At the time one has the perceptual cognition "I perceive this", the object is not seen. At the moment in which awareness of perception occurs, neither the visual perception itself nor the object exist. How then can you attribute the property of being perceived to either the visual perception or the object, especially a

[251] For explaining perception, the existence of things perceived is not necessary.

momentary object like color, taste, etc., which at the same time of awareness of perception is destroyed?

Objection from Sautrantikas:

That which is not experienced by means of perceptual awareness is not remembered. Experience of the object concerned must have occurred before and that previous experience of the object concerned is perception. Thus the property of being perceived belongs to colored objects, etc..

But it is not proved that memory takes place only of objects that have been experienced before because

17a I have stated before how cognition occurs with the appearance of an object.

Commentary: I have already explained how a cognition like visual perception, etc., can take place even without a real object.

17b And memory follows from that.

Commentary: From that refers to the experience of perception. From the experience in which things appear to be there, but are not, awareness of perception is born. That awareness of perception is caused by memory and is instrumental for the imagination of color, etc. Thus experience of a real object cannot be proved on the basis of memory.

Objection: **If the cognition in a dream arises without any existent content, similarly the cognition of a waking person would have been without any existent content, the people would realize the non-existence of those contents. But it does not happen like that. Therefore unlike in the dream, all cognitions of objects (in the waking state) are not without existent objects.**

Response: This does not prove the existence of objects in the waking cognitions.

17c One does not realize the non-existence of objects of cognitions in the dreaming state as long as one is not awakened.

Commentary:

By means of the drowsiness caused by impressions arising from habitual false imaginations, ordinary people are extremely deluded in the dreaming state as well as the waking state. While cognizing non-existent objects in the dreaming state, one does not realize the non-existence of the objects until one awakens. But when that extraordinary, unimagined, unconstructed, prelingustic cognition opposite to delusion is attained, one becomes enlightened and realizes the non-existence of external objects by means of facing the pure ordinary knowledge of objects in light of the extraordinary unconstructed, prelinguistic cognition. It is in this respect that waking and dreaming cognitions are similar.

Objection: **If it is, as you say, that cognitions, in which objects appear to be there for living beings, arise only from the particular transformations of one's own cognitive series, and not from any particular real objects, then how can one distinguish between the association of good and bad friends and the listening to good and bad teachings?**

18a The influential power inherent in cognition is reciprocal between individuals.

(The opponent's view is not justified) because of the influential power mutually inherent in the cognitons of all people. 'Mitha' means mutual. By means of a given cognition belonging to one cognitive series, a given cognition belonging to another cognitive series is generated, and not by means of any particular external object.

Objection: **If, in both waking and dreaming states, cognitions are without objects, then why is it that the same desired or undesired future results consequent upon performing meritorious or demeritorious acts, do not occur to one who is dreaming and another who is awake?**

18b Consciousness in dream is overpowered by drowsiness, so the results (of waking and dreaming cognitions) are not equal.

Commentary:

The presence of objects in the waking state is not the cause of the difference.

Objection: **If the universe is only consciousness, then there can be no body or speech belonging to anyone. How is it that death occurs to living beings, like sheep, etc., after they are attacked by hunters? If the death of sheep is not caused by their hunters, then how do the hunters accrue the demerit associated with the taking of life?**

19 Death takes place by means of another cognition series just as the loss of memory, etc., occurs on account of the controlling mind of wicked departed souls.

Commentary: (Your objection is not valid) because of the disturbance in the form of memory loss and inauspicious dreams due to the entrance of departed wicked souls and planets into living beings. As in the case of Sarana's seeing dreams sent by the psychic power of Maha-Katyayana, or, as in the case of Vemacitra (Lord of the demons) being defeated by means of the mental violence of the rsis. In the same way, under the control of another living being's particular cognitive series, a change occurs in the cognitive series of another living being whose life and senses are destroyed. In this way death, which is called the discontinuity of one of an aggregate series of bodies, occurs. This must be understood.

20a Otherwise, how could the Dandaka Forest have been destroyed by the anger of the rsis?

Commentary: If you do not accept that death occurs to living beings by the psychic influence of another cognitive series, (then the following incident related in the Buddhist scriptures cannot be explained). The Lord Buddha, in order to prove that mental violence is the most reprehensible act, asked the householder, Upali, this question: "Oh chief of the family! What have you heard regarding how the Dandaka, Matanga, and Kalinga Forests were emptied and purified?"

"Oh Gautama! I have heard it was by means of the mental disturbance in the minds of the rsis.

20b **How can you prove by that scriptural account that mental violence is the most reprehensible act?**

Commentary: If it is supposed that the inhabitants of the forests were not destroyed by rsis but by non-humans spirits who were extremely pleased to do so, then how could this (supposed) action (of such non-human spirits) prove that mental violence is more reprehensible than physical or verbal violence? (It cannot be as you suppose because) it is the mental disturbance only that is directly responsible for the destruction of the many inhabitants of the forests (and not the non-human spirits).

Opponent: **If the whole universe is consciousness only (and nothing else is real), then tell me whether or not Yogins (the knowers of others' minds) know others' minds?**

Proponent: What is the relevancy of this question?

Opponent: **If they do not know the minds of others, then why are they called 'knowers of others' minds'? If they do know the minds of others, (then your hypothesis of consciousness-only fails.**

21a **Opponent's question: How can you say that even a yogic cognition does not conform to the object experienced?** Vasubandhu's answer: Just as the Yogins' cognition of their own mind does not conform to the object, similarly, even their cognition of others' minds does not conform to the object.

Commentary: Opponent's objection: **How is it that even the Yogins' cognition of their own mind does not conform to the object?**

21b Vasubandhu's answer: Yogins do not know the true nature of mind as the Lord Buddha realized it.

Commentary: Due to ignorance, Yogins do not know the inexpressible nature of their own mind or the mind of others as the Lord Buddha knows the inexpressible nature of these minds. Because the yogins have not totally discarded the duality of grasper and grasped, the mind appears falsely to them. The doctrine of mind-only is unfathomably deep because it has innumerable methods and various aspects by means of which it can be ascertained.

22a I have composed this work establishing the doctrine of mind-only according to my abilities, but (even if the doctrine has not been convincing) in all aspects, it should not be doubted...

Commentary: The doctrine of mind-only cannot be fully pondered by people like me because it is not an object of reasoning.

Objection: **Then who knows the doctrine of mind-only in its entirety?**[252]

22b because it is the object of the Buddha's knowledge.

Commentary: In the Buddha's comprehensive knowledge of all knowables, there is no obstruction. Here ends this work of acarya Vasubandhu, (namely) the collection of twenty verses for the establishment of mind-only.

[252] For whom is it (i.e., mind-only in its entirety) an object of knowledge?

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